

THE
DOCTRINE

OF

Philosophical Necessity

ILLUSTRATED.



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THE
D O C T R I N E
O F
Philosophical Necessity

I L L U S T R A T E D ;

B E I N G A N

A P P E N D I X

T O T H E

Disquisitions relating to Matter and Spirit.

T O W H I C H I S A D D E D

An Answer to the LETTERS ON MATERIALISM,
and on HARTLEY'S THEORY OF THE MIND.

B Y JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, LL. D. F. R. S. K

The gen'ral ORDER, since the whole began,
Is kept in NATURE, and is kept in MAN.

POPE.

L O N D O N :

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T O
J O H N J E B B, M. D.

DEAR SIR,

I Flatter myself that you will permit me to take this opportunity of perpetuating, as far as I am able, the very high regard that I entertain for a person who has distinguished himself as you have done by an attachment to the *unadulterated principles of christianity*, how unpopular soever they may have become through the prejudices of the weak or the interested part of mankind, and who has

made the sacrifice that you have made to the *cause of truth* and the *rights of conscience*.

I think myself happy in concurring, as I hope, with your ardent zeal for the cause of *civil and religious liberty* in their full extent ; and I am convinced that to act as you have done is the proper method that a *christian* ought to take in order to promote it. It is our business, whenever called upon, to bear our testimony to whatever we apprehend to be *truth* and *right*, upon no occasion to swerve from our real principles (which would be equivalent to denying Christ, or being ashamed of him, and

and his cause before men) whether we see that any good will result from what we may suffer by such a profession, or not. We ought to content ourselves with acting under the *express orders* of one who is the proper judge of what is expedient for his interest and his church, as well as for our happiness; and we may rest assured, that we can only sustain a *temporary loss* by such an implicit, but reasonable obedience.

Could we only, my friend, expand our minds fully to conceive, and act up to, the great principle asserted in this treatise, of the truth of which we are both of us

convinced, nothing more would be wanting to enable us to exert this, and every other effort of *true greatness of mind*.

We ourselves, complex as the structure of our minds, and our principles of action are, are links in a great connected chain, parts of an immense whole, a very little of which only we are as yet permitted to see, but from which we collect evidence enough, that the whole system (in which we are, at the same time, both *instruments* and *objects*) is under an unerring direction, and that the final result will be most glorious and happy. Whatever men may intend, or
execute,

execute, all their designs, and all their actions, are subject to the secret influence and guidance of one who is necessarily the best judge of what will most promote his own excellent purposes. To him, and in his works, all seeming *discord* is real *harmony*, and all apparent *evil*, ultimate *good*.

This world, we see, is an admirable *nursery for great minds*. Difficulties, opposition, persecution, and evils of every other form, are the necessary *instruments* by which they are made, and even *the captain of our salvation*, was himself *made perfect through suffering*. A mixture of pleasing events
does,

x THE DEDICATION.

does, likewise, contribute to the same end ; but of the due proportions in this mixture we are no judges. Considering, however, in whose hands are the several ingredients of the *cup* of mortal life, we may be assured that it will never be more bitter, than will be necessary, to make it, in the very highest degree, salutary.

You and I, Sir, rejoice in the belief, that the whole human race are under the same *wholesome discipline*, and that they will all certainly derive the most valuable advantages from it, though in different degrees, in different ways, and at different periods; that even the
perfe-

persecutors are only giving the precedence to the persecuted, and advancing them to a much higher degree of perfection and happiness; and that they must themselves, for the same benevolent purpose, undergo a more severe discipline than that which they are the means of administering to others.

With this persuasion we cannot but consider every *being*, and every *thing*, in a favourable light. Every person with whom we have any connexion is a *friend*, and every event in life is a *benefit*; while God is equally the father, and the friend, of the whole creation.

I hope,

I hope, dear Sir, we shall always be careful to strengthen and extend these great and just views of the glorious system to which we belong. It is only by losing sight of these principles that we adopt *mean purposes*, and become slaves to *mean passions*, as also that we are subject to be chagrined and unhinged by seemingly cross accidents in life.

So long as we can practically believe that there is but *one will* in the whole universe, that this one will, exclusive of all *chance*, or the interference of any other will, disposes of all things, even to their minutest circumstances, and always
for

for the best of purposes, it is impossible but that we must rejoice in, and be thankful for, all events, without distinction. And when our will and our wishes shall thus perfectly coincide with that of the sovereign Disposer of all things, *whose will is always done, in earth, as well as in Heaven*, we shall, in fact, attain the summit of perfection and happiness. We shall have a kind of *union with God* himself; his will shall be our will, and even his power our power; being ever employed to execute our wishes and purposes, as well as his; because they will be, in all respects, the same with his.

These

These heart-reviving and soul-ennobling views we cannot, my friend, in this imperfect state, expect to realize and enjoy, except at intervals; but let us make it our business to make these happy seasons of philosophical and devout contemplation more frequent, and of longer continuance. Let them encroach more and more on the time that we must give to the bustle of a transitory world; till our minds shall have received such a lasting impression, as that its effect may be felt even in the midst of the greatest tumult of life, and inspire a serenity and joy, which *the world can neither give nor take away.*

In these principles alone do we find a perfect coincidence between *true religion* and *philosophy*; and by the help of the latter, we are able to demonstrate the excellence of the moral precepts of the former. And the more we understand of human nature, which is an immense field of speculation, barely opened by our revered master Dr. Hartley, the more clearly, I doubt not, shall we perceive how admirably is the whole system of revealed religion adapted to the nature and circumstances of man, and the better judges shall we be of that most important branch of its evidence, which results from considering

dering the effects which the first promulgation of it had on the minds of those to whom it was proposed, both Jews and Gentiles. Let us then study the *Scriptures*, *Ecclesiastical History*, and the *Theory of the Human Mind*, in conjunction; being satisfied, that from the nature of the things, they must, in time, throw a great and new light upon each other.

Permit me, dear Sir, to flatter myself that, as you have followed the great Dr. Hartley in his application to *theological*, *mathematical*, and *philosophical* studies, and also in his profession of the theory and practice of *medicine*, you will still

pursue his footsteps, in applying the elements of all these branches of science to the farther investigation of the phenomena of the *human mind*, which is a great and ample field, worthy of your superior talents.

Hoping to enjoy your communications, and valuable friendship, together with that of our common and most excellent friend Mr. Lindsey, whose views of these things are the same with ours, and with whom, in *principle* and *object*, we cannot be too strictly united, and that, mindful of the apostolical advice, we shall always *consider*

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*one another to provoke unto love
and to good works.*

I remain,

Dear Sir,

your affectionate friend,

and fellow labourer,

CALNE,
Aug. 1, 1777.

J. PRIESTLEY.

THE

T H E
P R E F A C E.

I Did not originally intend to write a separate treatise on the subject of *Philosophical Necessity*, but only to consider the objection made to it from the sentiments of praise and blame, and the use of rewards and punishments, which is generally reckoned to be the greatest difficulty on the subject, in an Appendix to my *Disquisitions relating to Matter and Spirit*. There would have been a sufficient propriety in this ; because, if man, as is maintained in that treatise, be wholly a *material*, it will not be denied but that he must be a *mechanical* being. As, therefore, every thing belonging to the doctrine of materialism is,

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in fact, an argument for the doctrine of necessity, and, consequently, the doctrine of necessity is a direct inference from materialism, the defence of that inference would naturally accompany the proof of the proposition from which it was deduced.

But, for the same reason, I thought there would be a propriety in considering, in that Appendix, the view that has been given of this subject by Dr. Price, in his *Review of the Principles of Morals*, which is a very capital work of its kind. After this I was led to add another Essay on *the Nature of the Will*; and thus was brought by degrees to write, in separate Essays, all that is now before the reader; when, finding that it was too much to accompany another work, I distributed it into convenient sections, and reserved it for a volume by itself, but still considering it as an *Appendage to the Disquisitions*.

Still,

I am far, however, from giving it out as a *complete treatise* on the subject. On the contrary, I have only touched on those topics on which I imagined I could throw some new light, either by suggesting new considerations, or at least expressing myself with greater clearness. Those persons, therefore, who have not yet entered upon the discussion of this great question, I would refer to such writers as Mr. Collins, Dr. Jonathan Edwards, and Dr. Hartley. They will also find some things very well written on it by Mr. Hume, and Lord Kaimes, especially in his *Sketches on Man*.

Considering the many excellent treatises that have been written on this subject, and with how much clearness and solidity the argument has been handled, it may seem rather extraordinary, that the doctrine of philosophical liberty should have any adherents among persons of a liberal educa-

tion, and who are at all used to reflection. To repeat what I have said on a former occasion, I can truly say that, "If I were to
" take my choice of any metaphysical
" question, to defend against all oppugners,
" it should be the doctrine of Philosophical
" Necessity. There is no truth of which
" I have less doubt, and of the ground of
" which I am more fully satisfied. In-
" deed, there is no absurdity more glaring
" to my understanding than the notion of
" philosophical liberty." *Remarks on Dr. Beattie, &c.* p. 169.

It must, therefore, be the *consequences* of the doctrine at which persons are staggered. I have, on this account, discussed more particularly than I believe has been done before, various things relating to the consequences, real or imaginary, of the doctrine of necessity. And, whereas it has of late been imagined to be the same
thing

thing with the Calvinistic doctrine of *predestination*, I have shown, pretty much at large, the essential difference between the two schemes. I have also endeavoured to state in a just light what we are to think of those passages of the *sacred writers* that have been supposed to make for or against the doctrine of necessity.

I the less wonder, however, at the general hesitation to admit the doctrine of necessity in its full extent, when I consider that there is not, I believe, in the whole compass of human speculation, an instance in which the indisputable consequences, both theoretical and practical, of any simple proposition are so numerous, extensive, and important. On this account, though I believe every person, without exception, would not hesitate to admit all the *premises*, there are very few, indeed, who are not staggered, and made to pause, at the prof-

pect of the *conclusions*: and I am well aware that, notwithstanding all that ever can be advanced in favour of these conclusions, great and glorious as they really are in themselves, it requires so much strength of mind to comprehend them, (that I wish to say it with the least offence possible) I cannot help considering the doctrine as that which will always distinguish the real moral philosopher from the rest of the world; at the same time that, like all other great and practical truths, even those of christianity itself, its *actual influence* will not always be so great, as, from theory, it might be expected to be. If the doctrine have any bad effects, it is a proof with me that it was never clearly understood; just as all the mischiefs that have been occasioned by christianity have arisen from the corruptions and abuses of it.

I have taken some pains to trace the *history* of the controversy concerning liberty
and

and necessity, but I have not been able to succeed to my wish. What the ancients have said on the subject is altogether foreign to the purpose; their *fate* being quite a different thing from the *necessity* of the moderns. For though they had an idea of the certainty of the final event of some things, they had no idea of the necessary connection of all the preceding means to bring about the designed end; and least of all, had they any just idea of the proper *mechanism of the mind*, depending upon the certain influence of motives to determine the will, by means of which the whole series of events, from the beginning of the world to the consummation of all things, makes one connected *chain of causes and effects*, originally established by the Deity. Whereas, according to the ancient heathens, fate was something that even the gods often endeavoured in vain to resist. Whenever they supposed that any particular event was *decreed*, or *determined* upon,

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by any superior being, their idea was, that, if the event did not come to pass by means of natural causes, that superior Being would occasionally and effectually interpose, so as, at any rate, to make sure of the event.

The predestination of christians and Mahometans, was the same thing as the fate of the heathens. The Divine Being, they supposed, had determined that a certain train of events should absolutely take place, and that he generally provided supernatural means to accomplish his designs. This also appears to have been the notion of predestination as maintained by Luther, Calvin, and all the early reformers; and the same may be affirmed of the Jansenists among the Roman Catholics.

After the most diligent inquiry that I can make, it appears to me that Mr. Hobbes was the first who understood and main-

maintained the proper doctrine of philosophical necessity; and I think it no small honour to this country, that, among so many capital truths of a philosophical nature, this owes its discovery to England. And it is truly wonderful, considering that he was probably the first who published this doctrine, that he should have proposed it so clearly, and have defended it so ably, as he has done.

On his first mentioning the subject, which was only occasionally, in his *Leviathan*, he discovers a perfect knowledge of the true principle of it. His short paragraph is so comprehensive of the whole scheme and argument, that I shall in this place quote it intire, p. 108.

“ Liberty and necessity are consistent.
 “ As in the water that hath not only liberty,
 “ ty, but a necessity of descending in the
 “ channel, so likewise, in the actions
 4 which

“ which men voluntarily do, which, be-
 “ cause they proceed from their will, pro-
 “ ceed from liberty; and yet, because every
 “ act of man’s will, and every desire, and
 “ inclination, proceedeth from some cause,
 “ and that from another cause, in a con-
 “ tinual chain (whose first link is in the
 “ hand of God, the first of all causes) pro-
 “ ceed from necessity. So that to him
 “ that could see the connection of those
 “ causes, the necessity of all mens volun-
 “ tary actions would appear manifest.
 “ And therefore God, that seeth and dis-
 “ poseth all things, seeth also that the li-
 “ berty of man, in doing what he will, is
 “ accompanied with the necessity of doing
 “ that which God will, and no more nor
 “ less, For though men may do many
 “ things which God does not command,
 “ nor is therefore the author of them, yet
 “ they can have no passion, will, or ap-
 “ petite to any thing, of which appetite
 “ God’s will is not the cause. And did not
 “ his

“ his will assure the necessity of man’s
 “ will, and consequently of all that on
 “ man’s will dependeth, the liberty of men
 “ would be a contradiction and impedi-
 “ ment to the omnipotence and liberty of
 “ of God.”

I am rather surprized that Mr. Locke, who seems to have been so much indebted to Mr. Hobbes for the clear view that he has given us of several principles of human nature, should have availed himself so little of what he might have learned from him on this subject. It is universally acknowledged that his chapter on *power*, in his *Essay on the Human Understanding*, is remarkably confused; all his *general maxims* being perfectly consistent with, and implying, the doctrine of necessity, and being manifestly inconsistent with the liberty which, after writing a long time exactly like a necessarian, he attributes to man.

But

But the obscurity that was thrown on this subject by Mr. Locke was effectually cleared up by Mr. Collins, in his *Philosophical Inquiry concerning Human Liberty*, published in 1717. This treatise is concise and methodical, and is, in my opinion, sufficient to give entire satisfaction to every unprejudiced person. I wish this small tract was reprinted, and more generally known and read. It will, however, remain, and do the greatest honour to the author's memory, when all the quibbling answers to it shall be forgotten. It was in consequence of reading and studying this treatise, that I was first convinced of the truth of the doctrine of necessity, and that I was enabled to see the fallacy of most of the arguments in favour of philosophical liberty; though I was much more confirmed in this principle by my acquaintance with *Dr. Hartley's Theory of the Human Mind*, a work to which I owe much more than I am able to express.

I was

I was not, however, a ready convert to the doctrine of necessity. Like Dr. Hartley himself, I gave up my liberty with great reluctance; and in a long correspondence which I once had on the subject, I maintained very strenuously the doctrine of liberty, and did not at all yield to the arguments then proposed to me. My correspondent importuned me to permit him to publish the letters; but though I was at that time very young, not having entered upon a course of academical learning, I had the prudence not to consent to his proposal.

With these previous remarks, I submit to the candour of the reader what I have been able to advance on the great and glorious, but unpopular doctrine of *Philosophical Necessity*.

I have been thinking of you very much lately
and wondering how you are getting on
I hope you are well and happy
I have been very busy lately
but I have not time to write to you
I am sure you will understand
I am sure you will understand
I am sure you will understand

I am sure you will understand
I am sure you will understand
I am sure you will understand
I am sure you will understand
I am sure you will understand
I am sure you will understand
I am sure you will understand

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S E C T I O N I.

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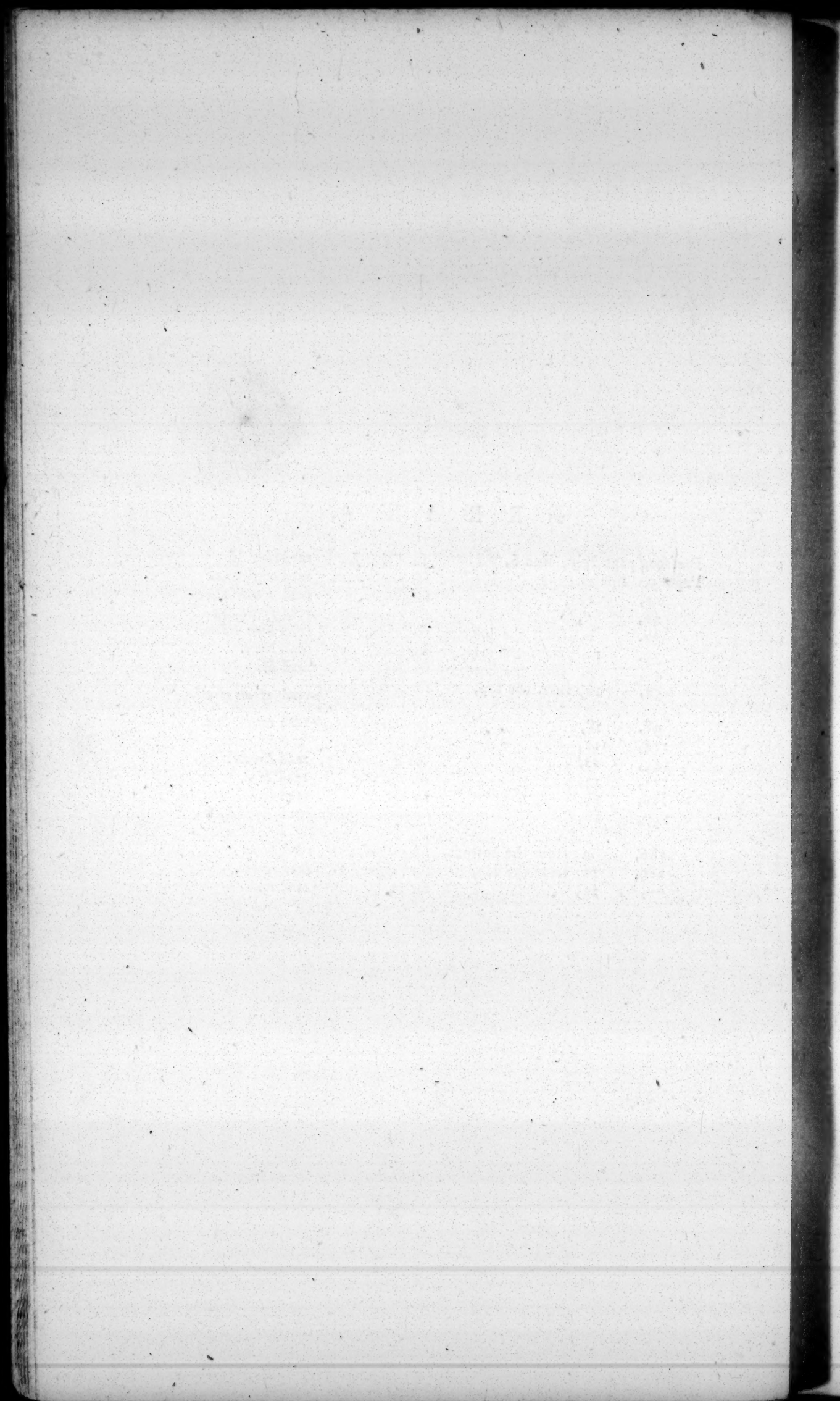
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E R R A T A:

Preface, page xxiv, line 6,		for (<i>that I,</i>	read <i>that I.</i>
Page 5, line 10,		for <i>preferences,</i>	read <i>preference.</i>
17,	1,	for <i>bis,</i>	read <i>a man's.</i>
21,	7,	for <i>pre-telling,</i>	read <i>foretelling.</i>
37,	2, from the bottom,	for <i>than,</i>	read <i>than what.</i>
39,	11, from the top,	for <i>idea,</i>	read <i>ideas.</i>
46,	4, from the bottom,	for <i>tbe,</i>	read <i>his</i>
53,	16, from the top,	for <i>in which an</i>	} read <i>of an object.</i>
		<i>object is,</i>	
98,	18,	for <i>intelligences,</i>	read <i>intelligence.</i>
114,	12,	dele <i>views.</i>	
145,	17,	for <i>Pf. xvi. 23,</i>	read <i>Pr. xvi. 33.</i>
151,	14,	for <i>that,</i>	read <i>bis.</i>
156,	15,	for <i>are,</i>	read <i>is.</i>
157,	10,	for <i>supralapsanans</i>	read <i>supralapsa-</i>
			<i>rians.</i>
186,	2, from the bottom,	for <i>proved,</i>	read <i>proud.</i>
189,	12, from the top,	for <i>reasons,</i>	read <i>reason.</i>
—,	22,	for <i>in,</i>	read <i>to.</i>



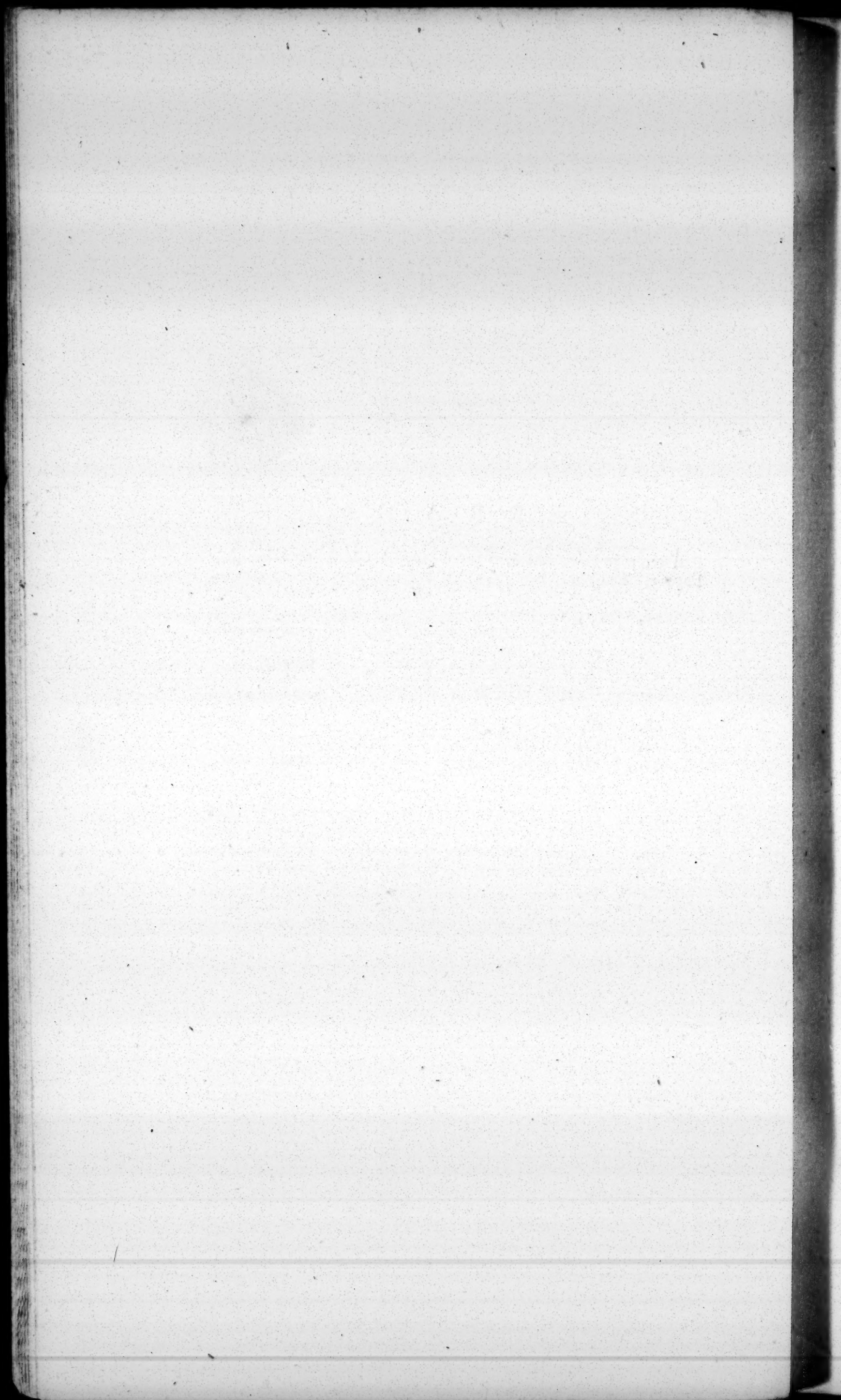
SECTION I.

*Of the true STATE OF THE QUESTION
respecting Liberty and Necessity.*

ONE of the chief sources of the difference of opinion respecting the subject of *liberty and necessity*, and likewise of much of the difficulty that has attended the discussion of it, seems to have been a want of attention to the proper *stating of the question*. Hence it has come to pass that the generality of those who have stood forth in defence of what they have called *liberty*, do, in fact, admit every thing that is requisite to establish the doctrine of necessity; but they have misled themselves and others by *the use of words*; and also, wanting sufficient *strength of mind*, they have been staggered at the consequences of their own principles. I shall therefore begin with some observations, which, I hope,

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may



SECTION I.

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B

may

may tend to throw light upon the nature of the subject in debate, and help the reader to understand what it is that, as a necessarian, I contend for.

In the first place, I would observe, that I allow to man all the liberty, or power, that is *possible in itself*, and to which the ideas of mankind in general ever go, which is *the power of doing whatever they will, or please*, both with respect to the operations of their minds, and the motions of their bodies, uncontrolled by any foreign principle, or cause. Thus every man is at liberty to turn his thoughts to whatever subject he pleases, to consider the reasons for or against any scheme or proposition, and to reflect upon them as long as he shall think proper; as well as to walk wherever he pleases, and to do whatever his hands and other limbs are capable of doing.

Mr. Hobbes has given the following clear and happy illustration of this subject. "Liberty" says he, (see his *Works*, p. 483) "is the absence of all impediments to
" action, that are not contained in the na-
" ture

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“ ture and intrinsic quality of the agent.
 “ As for example, water is said to de-
 “ scend freely, or to have liberty to de-
 “ scend, by the channel of the river, be-
 “ cause there is no impediment that way,
 “ but not across, because the banks are im-
 “ pediments. And though the water can-
 “ not ascend, yet men never say it wants li-
 “ berty to ascend, but the *faculty* or *power* ;
 “ because the impediment is *in the nature*
 “ *of the water*, and *intrinsically*. So also
 “ we say he that is tied wants the liberty
 “ to go, because the impediment is not in
 “ *him*, but in his *bands* ; whereas we say
 “ not so of him that is sick or lame, be-
 “ cause the impediment is *in himself*.”

In acknowledging in man a liberty to do whatever he pleases, I grant not only all the liberty that the generality of mankind have any idea of, or can be made to understand, but also all that many of the professed advocates for liberty, against the doctrine of necessity, have claimed.

“ How needless, says Mr. Wollaston (*Re-*
 “ *ligion of Nature*, p. 112) to me seem
 “ those disputes about *human liberty*, with

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“ which men have tired themselves and
 “ the world.—Sure it is in a man’s power
 “ to keep his hand from his mouth. If it
 “ is, it is also in his power to forbear
 “ excess in eating and drinking. If he
 “ has the command of his own feet, so as
 “ to go either this way or that, or no whi-
 “ ther, as sure he has, it is in his power
 “ to abstain from vicious company and
 “ vicious places, and so on.”

Again, he says, p. 346. “ I can move
 “ my hand upwards or downwards, &c.
 “ just as I will, &c. The motion, or the
 “ rest of my hand, depends upon my
 “ will, and is alterable upon thought, at
 “ my pleasure. If then I will, as I am
 “ sensible I have a *power* of moving my
 “ hand, in a manner which it would not
 “ move in by those laws which mere
 “ bodies, already in motion, or under
 “ the force of gravitation, would observe,
 “ this motion depends solely upon my
 “ *will*, and *begins* there.” I would ob-
 serve, however, that it by no means fol-
 lows, that because the motion depends up-
 on the *will*, it therefore *begins* there; the
 4 will

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will itself being determined by some motive.

Mr. Locke acknowledges that, properly speaking, freedom does not belong to the *will*, but to the *man*; and agreeable to the definition of liberty given above, he says (*Essay*, vol. i. p. 193) “As far as a man has power to think or not to think, to move or not to move, according to the preferences or direction of his own mind, so far is a man free.” The will, he acknowledges, is always determined by the most *pressing uneasiness*, or *desire*, p. 204; as he also acknowledges that it is *happiness*, and *that alone* that moves the desire, p. 209. And all the liberty that he contends for, and for the existence of which he appeals to experience, is a liberty that I am far from disclaiming, viz. a liberty of *suspending our determinations*.

“The mind,” says he (p. 209) “having, in most cases, as is evident in experience, a power to suspend the execution and satisfaction of any of its desires, and so of all, one after another, is at
B 3 “liberty

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“ liberty to consider the objects of them,
 “ examine them on all sides, and weigh
 “ them with others. In this lies the liber-
 “ ty a man has. He has a power to suspend
 “ the prosecution of this or that desire, as
 “ every one daily may experience in him-
 “ self. This seems to me the source of
 “ all liberty. In this seems to consist that
 “ which is, as I think, improperly called
 “ *free will*.”

I would only observe with respect to this, that a determination to suspend a volition, is, in fact, *another volition*, and therefore, according to Mr. Locke's own rule, must be determined by the most pressing uneasiness, as well as any other. If any man voluntarily suspends his determination, it is not without some motive, or reason; as, for instance, because he is apprehensive of some ill consequence arising from a hasty and inconsiderate resolution. On the other hand, if he determines immediately, it is because he has no such apprehension. In fact, all the liberty that Mr. Locke contends for is perfectly consistent with the doctrine of philosophical necessity

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necessity, though he does not seem to have been aware of it.

All the *liberty*, or rather *power*, that I say a man has not, is that of *doing several things when all the previous circumstances* (including the *state of his mind*, and his *views of things*) are precisely the same. What I contend for is that, with the same state of mind, the same strength of any particular passion, for example, and the same views of things, as any particular object appearing equally desirable, he would always, voluntarily, make the same choice, and come to the same determination. For instance, if I make any particular choice to day, I should have done the same yesterday, and shall do the same to-morrow, provided there be no change in the state of my mind respecting the object of the choice.

In other words, I maintain that there is some *fixed law of nature respecting the will*, as well as the other powers of the mind, and every thing else in the constitution of nature; and consequently that it is never

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determined without some real or apparent *cause*, foreign to itself, i. e. without some *motive of choice*, or that motives influence us in some definite and invariable manner; so that every volition, or choice, is constantly regulated, and determined, by what precedes it. And this *constant* determination of mind, according to the motives presented to it, is all that I mean by its *necessary determination*. This being admitted to be the fact, there will be a necessary connection between all things past, present, and to come, in the way of proper *cause and effect*, as much in the intellectual, as in the natural world; so that, how little soever the bulk of mankind may be apprehensive of it, or staggered by it, according to the established laws of nature, no event could have been otherwise than it *has been*, *is*, or *is to be*, and therefore all things past, present, and to come, are precisely what the Author of nature really intended them to be, and has made provision for.

SECTION

SECTION II.

*Of the Argument in favour of the Doctrine
of Necessity from the consideration of
CAUSE AND EFFECT.*

TO establish the conclusion defined in the preceding section, nothing is necessary but that, throughout all nature, the same consequences should invariably result from the same circumstances. For if this be admitted, it will necessarily follow that at the commencement of any system, since the several parts of it, and their respective situations, were appointed by the Deity, the first change would take place according to a *certain rule*, established by himself, the result of which would be a *new situation*; after which, the same laws continuing, another change would succeed, according to the same rules, and so on for ever; every new situation invariably leading to another, and every event, from the commencement to the termination of the system, being strictly connected; so that, unless the fundamental laws of the system were

were changed, it would be impossible that any event should have been otherwise than it was; just as the precise place where a billiard ball rests is necessarily determined by the impulse given to it at first, notwithstanding its impinging against ever so many other balls, or the sides of the table.

In all these cases the circumstances preceding any change are called the *causes* of that change; and since a determinate event, or effect, constantly follows certain circumstances, or causes, the connection between the cause and the effect is concluded to be *invariable*, and therefore *necessary*.

This chain of causes and effects cannot be broken, but by such a provision in the constitution of nature, as that the same event shall not certainly follow the same preceding circumstances. In this case, indeed, it might be truly said that any particular event might have been otherwise than it was, there having been no certain provision in the laws of nature for determining it to be *this* rather than *that*. But
then

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then this event, not being preceded by any circumstances that determined it to be what it was, would be *an effect without a cause*. For a *cause* cannot be defined to be any thing but *such previous circumstances as are constantly followed by a certain effect*; the constancy of the result making us conclude that there must be a *sufficient reason* in the nature of the things why it should be produced in those circumstances. So that, in all cases, if the result be different, either the circumstances must have been different, or there were no circumstances whatever corresponding to the difference in the result; and consequently the effect was without any cause at all.

These maxims are universal, being equally applicable to all things that belong to the constitution of nature, corporeal, or mental. If, for instance, I take a pair of scales loaded with equal weights, they both remain in equilibrio. By throwing an additional weight into one of the scales, I make a change in the circumstances, which is immediately followed by a *new situation*, viz. a depression of the one, and an elevation

tion of the opposite scale; and having observed the same effect before, I was able to foretel that this depression of the one scale, and elevation of the other, would be the certain consequence. It could not be otherwise while the same laws of nature were preserved. In order to its being possible for it to have been otherwise, the laws of nature must have been so framed, as that, upon throwing in the additional weight, the scale might, or might not, have been depressed; or it might have been depressed without any additional weight at all. But in this case there would have been an effect without a cause; there having been no *change of circumstances* previous to the change of situation, viz. the depression of the scale. In fact, this is the only reason why we say that such an effect would have been produced without a cause.

In every determination of mind, or in cases where volition or choice is concerned, all the previous circumstances to be considered are the *state of mind* (including every thing belonging to the *will itself*) and the *views of things* presented to it; the latter

latter of which is generally called the *motive*, though under this term some writers comprehend them both. To distinguish the *manner* in which events depending upon *will* and *choice* are produced, from those in which no volition is concerned, the former are said to be produced *voluntarily*, and the latter *mechanically*. But the same general maxims apply to them both. We may not be able to determine *a priori* how a man will act in any particular case, but it is because we are not particularly acquainted with his *disposition of mind*, *precise situation*, and *views of things*. But neither can we tell which way the wind will blow to-morrow, though the *air* is certainly subject to no other than necessary laws of motion.

A particular determination of mind could not have been otherwise than it was, if the laws of nature respecting the mind be such, as that the same determination shall constantly follow the same state of mind, and the same views of things. And it could not be possible for any determination to have been otherwise than it *has been*, *is*,
or

or *is to be*, unless the laws of nature had been such, as that, though both the state of mind, and the views of things, were the same, the determination might, or might not, have taken place. But in this case the determination must have been an effect without a cause, because in this case, as in that of the balance, there would have been *a change of situation without any previous change of circumstances*; and there cannot be any other definition of an effect without a cause. The application of the term *voluntary* to mental determinations cannot possibly make the least difference in this case.

If the laws of nature be such as that, in given circumstances, I constantly make a definite choice, my conduct through life is determined by the Being who made me, and placed me in the circumstances in which I first found myself. For the consequence of the first given circumstances was a *definite voluntary determination*, which bringing me into other circumstances, was followed by another definite determination, and so on from the beginning of life
to

PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY. 15

to the end of it; and upon no scheme whatever can this chain of situations of mind, and consequent mental determination, or of causes and effects, be broken, but by a constitution which shall provide that, in given circumstances, there shall no definite determination follow; or that, without any change in the previous circumstances, there shall be a subsequent change of situation; which, as was observed before, would be an effect without a cause, a thing impossible even to *divine power*, because impossible to *power abstractedly considered*. Besides, if *one* effect might take place without a sufficient cause, another, and all effects, might have been without a cause; which entirely takes away the only argument for the being of a God.

It may perhaps help to clear up this matter to some persons, to consider that *voluntary* is not opposed to *necessary*, but only to *involuntary*, and that nothing can be opposed to *necessary*, but *contingent*. For a voluntary motion may be regulated by *certain rules* as much as a mechanical

one; and if it be regulated by any certain rules, or laws, it is as necessary as any mechanical motion whatever. Though, therefore, a man's determination be *his own*, the causes of it existing and operating within himself, yet if it be subject to any fixed laws, there cannot be any circumstances in which two different determinations might equally have taken place. For that would exclude the influence of all laws.

There may be circumstances, indeed, in which a variety of determinations, though confined within certain limits, might take place; but those are *general* circumstances. Circumscribe the circumstances, and a number of the possible determinations will be precluded; and when the circumstances are strictly limited, the determination can be no other than precisely one and the same; and whenever those precise circumstances occur again, the inclination of mind being the same, and the views of things precisely the same also, the very same determination, or choice, will certainly be made. The choice is, indeed,
his

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his own making, and voluntary; but in voluntarily making it, he follows the laws of his nature, and invariably makes it in a certain definite manner. To suppose the most perfectly voluntary choice to be made without regard to the laws of nature, so that with the same inclination, and degree of inclination, and the same views of things presented to us, we might be even voluntarily disposed to choose either of two different things at the same moment of time, is just as impossible as that an involuntary or mechanical motion should depend upon no certain law or rule, or that any other effect should exist without an adequate cause.

What is most extraordinary is, that there are persons who admit this indissoluble chain of circumstances and effects, so that nothing could have been otherwise than it is, and yet can imagine that they are defending the doctrine of philosophical liberty, and opposing the doctrine of necessity. The author of *Letters on Materialism*, says (p. 171) that "the moral influence of motives is as *certain*, though

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“not *necessitating* as is the physical cause.” But this is a distinction merely *verbal*. For the only reason that we can have to believe in any *cause*, and that it acts *necessarily*, is that it acts *certainly*, or *invariably*. If my mind be as *constantly* determined by the influence of motives, as a stone is determined to fall to the ground by the influence of gravity, I am constrained to conclude that the *cause* in one case acts as necessarily as that in the other. For there must be an *equally sufficient reason* for equally constant and certain effects.

No less fallacious is it to say, with this writer, p. 166, that “motives do not impel or determine a man to act; but that a man, from the view of the motives, determines himself to act.” For if he certainly and constantly determines himself to act according to motives, there must be a sufficient *reason* why motives have this influence over him. If, in fact, he never do act contrary to their influence, it can only be because he has *no power* so to do; and therefore he is subject to an absolute necessity as much upon this as upon

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upon any other method of stating the
question. By such poor evasions do some
persons think to shelter themselves from the
force of conviction.

S E C T I O N III.

Of the Argument for Necessity from the
DIVINE PRESCIENCE.

AS it is not within the compass of
power in the author of any system,
that an event should take place without a
cause, or that it should be equally possible
for two different events to follow the same
circumstances, so neither, supposing this
to be possible, would it be within the com-
pass of *knowledge* to foresee such a contin-
gent event. So that, upon the doctrine
of philosophical liberty, the Divine Being
could not possibly foresee what would hap-
pen in his own creation, and therefore
could not provide for it; which takes away
the whole foundation of *divine providence*,
and moral government, as well as all the

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foundation of *revealed religion*, in which
prophecies are so much concerned.

That an event truly contingent, or not necessarily depending upon previous circumstances, should be the object of knowledge, has, like other things of a similar nature, in modern systems, been called a *difficulty* and a *mystery*; but in reality there cannot be a greater absurdity, or contradiction. For as certainly as nothing can be known *to exist* but what does exist, so certainly can nothing be known *to arise from what does exist*, but what does arise from it, or depend upon it. But, according to the definition of the terms, a contingent event does not depend upon any previous known circumstances; since some other event might have arisen in the same circumstances.

All that is within the compass of knowledge in this case is, to foresee all the different events that might take place in the same circumstances; but which of them will *actually* take place cannot possibly be known. In this case all degrees of know-
ledge

ledge or sagacity are equal. Did the case admit of *approximation* to certainty, in proportion to the *degree* of knowledge, it would be fully within the compass of infinite knowledge; but in this case there is no such approximation. To all minds the pretelling of a contingent event is equally a matter of conjecture: consequently, even infinite knowledge makes no difference in this case. For *knowledge* supposes an *object*, which, in this case, does not *exist*, and therefore cannot be *known to exist*. If man be possessed of a power of proper *self-determination*, the Deity himself cannot controll it (as far as he interferes, it is no self-determination of the man) and if he does not *controll* it, he cannot *foresee* it. Nothing can be known at present, except *itself*, or its *necessary cause*, exist at present. Yet the whole history of Revelation shews, that every determination of the mind of man is certainly foreknown by the Divine Being; determinations that took place from *natural* and *common causes*, where the mind was under no supernatural influence whatever; because men are cen-

fured and condemned for actions that were so foreseen.

The death of our Saviour is a remarkable instance of this kind. This event was certainly foreseen and intended, for it most particularly entered into the plan of divine providence; and yet it appears from the history, that it was brought about by causes perfectly natural, and fully adequate to it. It was just such an event as might have been expected from the known malice and prejudice of the Jewish rulers, at the time of his appearance. They certainly needed no supernatural instigation to push them on to their bloody and wicked purpose; and Pilate, disposed and situated as he was, needed no extraordinary impulse to induce him to consent to it, notwithstanding his hesitation, and his conviction of the malice and injustice of the proceedings; and both he and the Jews were righteously condemned and punished for it; which, I doubt not, will have the happiest effect in the system of the divine moral government.

This

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This argument from the divine prescience is briefly, but clearly stated, by Mr. Hobbes. "Denying necessity" says he (*Works*, p. 485) "destroys both the decrees and prescience of Almighty God. "For whatever God has purposed to bring to pass by man, as an instrument, or foresees shall come to pass, a man, if he has liberty, might frustrate, and make not to come to pass; and God should either not foreknow it, and not decree it, or he shall foreknow such things shall be as shall never be, and decree what shall never come to pass."

Indeed, many of the most zealous advocates for the doctrine of philosophical *liberty*, aware of its inconsistency with the doctrine of *divine prescience*, have not scrupled to give up the latter altogether. With respect to such persons, I can only repeat what I have said upon this subject in my *Examination of the Writings of Dr. Beattie*, &c. p. 173.

"Thus our author, in the blind rage of
"disputation, hesitates not to deprive the

“ ever-blessed God of that very-attribute,
 “ by which, in the books of scripture, he
 “ expressly distinguishes himself from all
 “ false Gods, and than which nothing can
 “ be more essentially necessary to the go-
 “ vernment of the universe, rather than re-
 “ linquish his fond claim to the fancied pri-
 “ vilege of *self-determination*; a claim
 “ which appears to me to be just as absurd
 “ as that of *self-existence*, and which could
 “ not possibly do him any good if he
 “ had it.”

What is more extraordinary, this power
 he arrogates to himself without pretending
 to advance a single rational argument in
 favour of his claim; but expects it will
 be admitted on the authority of his *instinc-*
tive common sense only. And yet if a man
 expresses the least indignation at such new
 and unheard-of arrogance, and in an argu-
 ment of such high importance as this,
 what *exclamation* and *abuse* must he not
 expect?

SECTION

SECTION IV.

*Of the cause of VOLITION, and the nature
of the WILL.*

IN all investigations relating to human nature, the philosopher will apply the same rules by which his inquiries have been conducted upon all other subjects. He will attentively consider *appearances*, and will not have recourse to more *causes* than are necessary to account for them.

He sees a stone whirled round in a string, and the planets perform their revolutions in circular orbits, and he judges, from *similar appearances*, that they are all retained in their orbits by powers that draw them towards the centers of their respective motions. . Again, a stone tends towards the earth by a power which is called *gravity*, and because, supposing the planets to have the same tendency to the sun that the stone has to the earth, and to have been projected in tangents to their present orbits, they would revolve exactly as they
are

are now observed to do, the philosopher, for that reason, concludes that the force which retains them in their orbits is the very same power of gravity; and on this account only, viz. *not to multiply causes without necessity*, he refuses to admit any other cause of the celestial motions.

Let us then consider the actions of men in the same natural and simple view, without any apprehension of being misled by it; and let it be enquired by what *rule* they are determined, or what are their *causes*.

Whenever any person makes a choice, or comes to any resolution, there are two circumstances which are evidently concerned in it, viz. what we call the *previous disposition of the mind*, with respect to love or hatred, for example, approbation or disapprobation, of certain objects, &c. and the ideas of external objects then present to the mind, that is, *the view of the objects* which the choice or resolution respects.

Let

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Let the objects be two kinds of fruit, *apples* and *peaches*. Let it be supposed that I am fond of the former, and have an aversion to the latter, and that I am disposed to eat fruit. In these circumstances, the moment that they are presented to me I take the apples, and leave the peaches. If it be asked, *why* I made this choice, or what was the *reason*, *cause*, or *motive* of it? it is sufficient to say, that I was fond of apples, but did not like peaches. In the same disposition to eat fruit, and retaining my predilection for apples, I should always, infallibly, do the same thing. The *cause* then of this choice was evidently my liking of apples, and my disliking of peaches; and though an inclination or affection of mind, be not gravity, it *influences* me, and *acts upon* me as certainly, and necessarily as this power does upon a stone. *Affection* determines my choice of the apples, and *gravity* determines the fall of the stone. Through custom we make use of different terms in these cases, but our ideas are exactly similar; the connection between the two things as *cause* and *effect* being equally strict and necessary.

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As a philosopher, therefore, I ought to acquiesce in this, and consider *motives* as the proper *causes* of volitions and actions. And the more I examine my own actions, or those of others, the more reason I see to be satisfied that all volitions and actions are preceded by corresponding motives.

In all *regular deliberations* concerning any choice, every reason or motive is distinctly attended to, and whatever appears to be the stronger, or the better reason, always determines us. In these cases the *choice* and the *motive*, correspond precisely to an *effect* and its *cause*. In cases that do not require a formal deliberation, i. e. in cases similar to those in which I have often determined before, the moment I perceive my situation I determine instantly, without attending distinctly, as before, to all the motives or reasons. But this *instantaneous determination* cannot be said not to be produced by motives, because it is, in fact, only the same *mental process abridged*, the action which was formerly connected or associated with the ideas presented to it by means of motives, being now itself immediate.

mediately connected with those ideas without the distinct perception of the motives which formerly intervened.

This process is exactly similar to the assent of the mind to geometrical propositions that are not self-evident; for example that *all the inward angles of a right lined triangle are equal to two right angles*. I do not perceive, the truth of this till the reason of it is explained to me; but when this has been once done, I afterwards, without attending to the reason, and even, perhaps, without being able to assign it, if it were demanded of me, habitually consider the two expressions as denoting the same quantity, and I argue from them accordingly.

Besides, since every *deliberate choice* is regulated by motives, we ought, as philosophers, to take it for granted that *every choice* is made in the same manner, and is subject to the same rules, and therefore determined by motives, by something that may be called liking or disliking, approving or disapproving, &c. depending upon the previous

vious state of the mind with respect to the object of choice ; since the mere *facility*, or *readiness*, with which a choice is made cannot make it to be a thing *different in kind* from a choice made with the greatest deliberation, and which took up so much time, that every circumstance attending it could be distinctly perceived.

Moreover, we see evidently, not only that men are determined to act by certain motives, but that the *vigour* of their actions corresponds also to what may be called the *intensity* of their motives. If a master be actuated simply by his anger, he will beat his servant more violently and continue the correction longer, in proportion to the *degree* of his anger, or the apprehended cause of his displeasure ; and kindness operates exactly in the same manner, a stronger affection prompting to greater, and more kind offices, than a weaker.

Also opposite motives, as causes of love and hatred, are known to balance one another, exactly like weights in opposite
 3 scales.

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scales. According to all appearance, nothing can act more invariably, or mechanically. Is it possible, then, that a philosopher, observing these constant and uniform appearances, should not conclude, that the proper cause of a man's actions are the motives by which he is influenced? Strengthen the motive, and the action is more vigorous; diminish it, and its vigour is abated; change the motive, and the action is changed; intirely withdraw it, and the action ceases; introduce an opposite motive of equal weight, and all action is suspended, just as a limb is kept motionless by the equal action of antagonist muscles. As far as we can judge, *motives* and *actions* do in all possible cases, strictly correspond to each other.

It cannot but be allowed by the most strenuous advocates for metaphysical liberty, that motives have *some real influence upon the mind*. It would be too manifest a contradiction to all experience, to assert that all objects are indifferent to us, that there is nothing in any of them that can excite *desire*, or *aversion*, or that desire or aversion have no influence upon the *will*,
and

and do not *incline us* to decide on what is proposed to us. Now can it be supposed that the will, whatever it be, should be of such a nature as both to be properly influenced, or acted upon by motives, and likewise by something that bears *no sort of relation to motive*, and consequently has a mode of action intirely different from that of motive? This cannot but appear exceedingly improbable, if not impossible.

Every other faculty of the mind has one uniform mode of operation, or affection. The *passions* are all excited by the view of proper objects, the *memory* is employed in retaining the ideas of things formerly impressed upon the mind, and the *judgment* in distinguishing the agreement or disagreement of ideas; whereas, according to the modern metaphysical hypothesis, the *will* is of such a nature, as to be influenced sometimes by the passions or motives, and sometimes in a manner in which neither passion nor motive have any thing to do, and of which it is not pretended that any idea can be given, but by saying that it is *self-determined*, which, in fact, gives no
idea.

necessarily from the perception of the ideas themselves, as that of their agreement or disagreement. In fact, all the difference between judgment and will is, that, in the former case, the determination relates to *opinions*, and in the latter to *actions*. And, as all the ancients have well observed, the faculties of the soul are only different modes in which the same principle acts; the judgment being the *mind judging*, and the will the *mind willing*; and it would be very extraordinary, indeed, if the same mind should not be determined in a *similar manner* in these two very similar cases, and that if there be a *self-determining will*, there should not be a *self-determining judgment* also. In reality, the latter is not more absurd, and contrary to all appearances, than the former.

All that is advanced above goes upon the common supposition, of the will being a *distinct faculty* of the mind, and not of its being, according to Dr. Hartley's theory, together with all the other faculties, a particular case of the general property of the *association of ideas*, which is necessarily
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of a mechanical nature, or of its being included in the idea of *desire*, which Dr. Price considers as only a motive with respect to the will.

But what is *desire*, besides a *wish* to obtain some apprehended good? and is not every wish a *volition*? Now is it possible that an apprehended good should not be the object of desire, whether controlled by some other desire, &c. or not? For the same reason that a present good gives present pleasure, an absent good excites *desire*, which, like any other of the passions, is universally allowed to be a perfectly mechanical thing. Since, therefore, desire necessarily implies volition, we have here a clear case of the will being necessarily determined by the circumstances which the mind is in; and if in *one case*, why not in *all others*? especially as, in fact, every volition is nothing more than a desire, viz. a desire to accomplish some *end*, which end may be considered as the *object* of the passion or affection?

That the determinations of what we call the will are, in fact, nothing more than a particular case of the general doctrine of association of ideas, and therefore a perfectly mechanical thing, I endeavoured to shew in the *Essay prefixed to my Examination of the Scotch Writers*. I shall in this place go over the argument again, more minutely.

Till the mind has been affected with a sense of pleasure or pain, all objects are alike indifferent to it; but some, in consequence of being always accompanied with a perception of pleasure, become pleasing to us, while others, in consequence of being accompanied with a sense of pain, become displeasing; and to effect this nothing can be requisite but the association of agreeable sensations and ideas with the one, and of disagreeable ones with the other. Admitting therefore, the doctrine of association, or that two ideas often occurring together will afterwards introduce one another, we have all that is requisite to the formation of all our *passions*, or *affections*;
or

or of some things being the objects of love, and others of hatred to us.

The manner in which actions, adapted to secure a favourite object, become associated with the idea of it, has been explained at large by Dr. Hartley; and it being universally admitted, that the view of a favourite object, of an apple to a child, for instance, is immediately followed by an attempt to seize it, I shall here take it for granted that there is such a necessary connection of these ideas and motions; and that, in the same manner, whenever the idea of any favourite object is presented to us, we endeavour to get it into our power.

If the favourite object be within our *immediate reach*, it will, upon these principles, be immediately seized; so that there will be no *interval* between the prospect and the enjoyment, except what was necessarily taken up in the bodily motions, &c. But this interruption, being nothing more than must always have been experienced, will occasion no pain or uneasiness;

ness; for all the parts of the whole process being intimately connected in the mind, the enjoyment will, in fact, commence the moment that the object comes in view. Thus we see that persons exceedingly hungry are perfectly easy and happy all the time of a necessary and expeditious preparation for dinner, and are never impatient, or uneasy, till the delay begins to be more than they had expected. An attentive observer of this process may call this state of mind that of *certain expectation*, which is always pleasurable, from the perfect association of all the stages of it with the final issue.

Let us now suppose this connected train of ideas to be interrupted. Let an apple, for instance, be shewn to a child, and immediately withdrawn, and thrown quite away; signs of uneasiness will be immediately perceived, the evident consequence of the interruption of a train of associated ideas, which had begun to take place in the mind; and the stronger the association had been, in consequence of its having been frequently repeated, and seldom interrupt-
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ed before, the greater pain will be felt by the interruption. This painful state of mind may be termed *disappointment* and *despair*.

Let us, in the next place, suppose the object to be known to be capable *in itself* of giving a person great pleasure, but to be intirely out of our reach, as the possession of a great estate to a poor man, or of a kingdom to a private gentleman. Having never had any *enjoyment*, or *hope* of it, this connected train of idea, leading from the object to the enjoyment (the interruption of which would have given him pain) never took place, and consequently it is regarded with perfect *indifference*.

If we be in circumstances in which the favourite object has been known to be sometimes obtained, and sometimes not, the mind will be held in a kind of *middle state* between certain expectation and despair, which will be called *hope* if we apprehend the chances to be in favour of our obtaining it, and *fear* if it be more probable that we shall not obtain it. To this

state of mind, viz. within the extreme limits of hope and fear, we apply the term *desire*; and it is in this state, which is of some continuance, that we distinctly perceive that affection of the mind to which we give the name of *wishing*, or *willing*.

But what is more properly called a *volition*, is most distinctly perceived when the object does not appear, at first sight, to be desirable or not, but requires that several circumstances be considered and compared. When a child sees an apple and immediately catches at it, it is a simple case of the association of ideas, and if no other cases had been known, the term *volition*, or *will*, would hardly have been thought of. But when the mind is kept in suspense between desiring and not desiring an object, the final *preponderancy of desire* is called a *will*, or *wish to obtain it*, and the *prevalence of aversion* is called a will, or *wish to decline it*. This case, however, of a proper *volition* succeeding a deliberation, though more complex, is not less mechanical, and dependent upon preceding ideas, and on the state of mind, than the others. It is
still

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still nothing more than association of ideas, though the final, and prevailing association, has been for some time prevented from taking place, by a variety of inferior associations.

The term *will* is as little applicable to determinations and actions *secondarily automatic*, as to those that are *originally* so; of which I shall give an explanation, together with a case.

The first motions of the fingers, or legs of a child, are called *automatic*, being the immediate and mechanical effect of an external impression, and not arising from any *idea* in the mind. To these motions the term *volition*, or *will*, is certainly not at all applicable.

Afterwards the same motions become associated with ideas, at which time they begin to be called *voluntary*, as when a child reaches out his hand to take an apple. But the motion is called *more perfectly voluntary*, in proportion as the ideas with which it is connected are more numerous
and

and complex, and when other ideas, present to the mind at the same time, have a connection with opposite motions, so that it shall be some time before the prevailing association takes place.

But when the motion shall be as perfectly associated with this *complex set of ideas*, or *state of mind*, as it was with a *single idea*, so that the one shall immediately follow the other, it is called *secondarily automatic*; and this being as instantaneous as an originally automatic motion, the term *volition* ceases to be applied to it. This is the case when a person walks without attending to the motion of his legs, or plays on a musical instrument without thinking of the particular position of his fingers; each of which motions and positions, having been dependent upon ideas, was before performed with deliberation, and an express volition.

As it is evident, from the observation of the fact, that automatic motions pass into voluntary ones, and these again into those that are secondarily automatic, it is evi-

dent that they are all equally mechanical ; the last process, in particular, being nothing but the second *shortened*, or, which is the same thing, the second, or the perfectly voluntary motion, being the last, or the secondarily automatic, *extended*. As, therefore, the last is evidently mechanical, no attention of mind being employed in it, the second must be so too, though an express attention be given to it.

In every view of the subject, therefore, whether the will be considered in a popular, or a philosophical sense, it appears that its determinations must be directed by certain invariable laws, depending upon the previous state of mind, and the ideas present to it, at the moment of forming any resolution ; so that in no case whatever could they have been otherwise than they actually were.

SECTION

SECTION V.

Of the supposed CONSCIOUSNESS OF LIBERTY, and the use of the term AGENT.

THE greatest difficulties in the consideration of the subject of liberty and necessity have arisen from *ambiguities in the use of terms*. To contribute, therefore, all that may be in my power to clear this important subject of the obscurity in which it has been involved, I shall consider the meaning of such terms as appear to me to have had the greatest share in perplexing it; and in doing this I shall take an opportunity of replying to what that excellent man, and very able metaphysician, Dr. Price has advanced upon this subject in his *Review of the Principles of Morals*, because it appears to me that he has been misled by the use of such words.

“ We have, in truth,” says he (p. 302)
 “ the same constant and necessary conscious-
 “ ness of liberty that we have that we *think*,
 “ *choose*, *will*, or even *exist*; and whatever
 “ to

PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY. 45

“ to the contrary men may say, it is im-
“ possible for them, in earnest, to think
“ they have no *active self-moving powers*,
“ and are not causes of their own volitions,
“ or not to ascribe to *themselves* what they
“ must be conscious they *think* and *do*.

“ A man choosing to follow his judg-
“ ment and desires, or his actually doing
“ what he is inclined to do, is what we
“ mean when we say *motives determine*
“ *him*. At the same time, it is very plain
“ that motives can have no concern in
“ effecting his determination, or that
“ there is no *physical connection* between
“ his judgment and views and the actions
“ consequent upon them. What must be
“ more absurd than to say that, *our incli-*
“ *nations act upon us, and compel us*, that
“ *our desires and fears put us in motion*, or
“ *produce our volitions*, i. e. are *agents*; and
“ yet what is more conceivable than that,
“ they may be the *occasions* of our putting
“ ourselves into motion. What sense
“ would there be in saying that the situa-
“ tion of a body, which may properly be
“ the *occasion*, or the *account*, of its being
“ struck

“struck by another body, is the *efficient*
“of its motion, or its *impeller*?”

I do not think that this objection to the doctrine of necessity can be expressed in a stronger or better manner, and I have purposely made this quotation, in order to meet the difficulty in its greatest force; being confident, that, when the ideas are attended to, it will appear that the writer is, in fact, a necessarian; and though unperceived by himself, is *in words only*, an advocate for the doctrine of metaphysical liberty. In order to avoid all ambiguity myself, I shall describe the *fact*, with respect to human nature, in such a manner as, I think, it shall hardly be possible to be misled by words.

Man is a being of such a make, that when certain things, two kinds of fruit, for instance, are proposed to him, they become the objects of desire, in different degrees, according to the experience of their different qualities, their wholesomeness, the pleasure they give to his taste, and various other considerations. As the *desire-*
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ableness, in this case, is complex, and the impression that each circumstance belonging to it makes upon the mind is also various, depending upon the momentary state of it, the presence or absence of other ideas, &c. it is possible that the comparative desirableness of the two fruits may vary much in a short space of time, sometimes the one and sometimes the other having the ascendant. But, provided the man were obliged to make a choice at any one moment of time, it will not be denied, that he would certainly choose that which appeared to him, for that moment, the more desirable. If he were under no restraint whatever, it is possible that, on some accounts, he might choose to make no choice at all, and he might neglect both the kinds of fruit. But still it would be because that conduct appeared *more desirable* than the other, *i. e.* *preferable* to it.

This, I will venture to say, is all that a man can possibly be *conscious of*, viz. that nothing hinders his choosing, or taking, whichever of the fruits appears to him more desirable, or his not making any
choice

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choice at all, according as the one or the other shall appear to him preferable upon the whole. But there is always some *reason* for any object, or any conduct, appearing desirable or preferable; a reason existing either in a man's own previous *disposition of mind*, or in his *idea of the things* proposed to him. In things of small consequence, or in a very quick succession of ideas, the reason may be forgotten, or even not be explicitly attended to, but it did exist, and actually contributed to make the thing, or the conduct, appear desirable at the time.

As this is all that any man can be conscious of with respect to himself, so it is all that he can observe with respect to others. Agreeably to this, whenever we either reflect upon our own conduct, or speculate concerning that of others, we never fail to consider, or ask, what could be the *motive* of such or such a choice; always taking for granted that there must have been some motive or other for it; and we never suppose, in such cases, that

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any choice could be made without some motive, some *apparent reason*, or other.

When it is said that a man acts from *mere will* (though this is not common language) the word is never used in a strict metaphysical sense, or for will under the influence of no motive; but the meaning is, that in such a case a man acts from *willfulness*, or *obstinacy*, i. e. to resist the control of others; the motive being to *show his liberty, and independence*, which is far from being a case in which a man is supposed to act without any motive at all.

The *consciousness of freedom*, therefore, is an ambiguous expression, and cannot prove any thing in favour of philosophical or metaphysical liberty; but, when rightly understood, appears to decide in favour of the doctrine of necessity, or the necessary influence of motives to determine the choice.

If what has been stated be the fact, and the whole fact (and for the truth of the representation I appeal to every man's

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own feeling and persuasion) it must be quite arbitrary, and can have no sort of consequence, except what is merely verbal, whether I say that the *cause* of the choice was the *motive* for it (which Dr. Price very properly defines to be the *judgment*, or the *desire*) or the *mind* in which that choice takes place, that is *myself*, or some other person; and to this cause it is that we ascribe the *agency*, or *determining power*. In the former case it is the power, or force, of the motive, and in the latter that of the person. In either case there is a certain *effect*, and the concurrence of two circumstances, viz. a *motive*, and a *mind*, to which that motive is presented, or in which it exists, for the *cause* of the effect.

If, according to the description given above, any person will maintain that, notwithstanding there be a real effect, and a sufficient cause, there is no proper *agency* at all, merely because the will is necessarily determined by motives, nothing follows but that, out of complaisance, I may substitute some other word in its place. For if it be asserted that we have a consciousness

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ness of any other kind of agency than has been described, the fact is denied, and I challenge any person to do more than merely assert it. Without any other kind of agency than I have described, the whole business of human life, consisting of a succession of volitions and corresponding actions, goes on, just as we observe it to do, and every just rule of life, respecting the regulation of the will and the conduct, has a perfect propriety and use, but no propriety or use at all on any other hypothesis.

However, I have no objection to meet Dr. Price upon his own ground in this instance, viz. appealing to the established *use of words*, with respect to the proper *cause* of volitions and actions. He says "What " would be more absurd than to say that " our *inclinations act upon us*, and *compel* " *us*, that our *desires and fears put us into* " *motion*, or *produce our volitions*." Absurd as this language appears to Dr. Price, it is, in fact, the common style in which the conduct of men is described, and certainly proves that, if men have any ideas really corresponding to their words, they

do consider the motives of mens actions to be, in a proper sense, the *causes* of them, more properly than the mind which is *determined by the motives*. This also is common popular language, and therefore must have a foundation in the common apprehension of mankind.

Dr. Price says, "If our inclinations
 "compel us to act, if our desires and fears
 "put us into motion, they are the *agents*;
 "whereas they are properly only the oc-
 "casion of our putting ourselves into mo-
 "tion." But what can this be besides a mere verbal distinction. If it be universally true, that the action certainly follows the motive, i. e. the inclination of the mind, and the views of things presented to it, it is all that a necessarian can wish for; all his *conclusions* follow, and he leaves it to others to ring changes upon words, and vary their expressions at pleasure.

Dr. Price, however, is particularly unhappy in what he advances in support of this arbitrary and verbal distinction. "What sense," says he, "can there be in
 "saying

“ saying that the situation of a body,
 “ which may properly be the *occasion*, or
 “ the *account* of its being struck by ano-
 “ ther body, is the *efficient* of its motion, or
 “ its *impeller* ?” Whereas, according to his
 own definition of *motive*, it includes both
 the inclination, or *disposition*, of the mind,
 and the *views of things presented to it*, and
 this manifestly takes in both the *impelling*
body, and *the situation* in which the body
 impelled by it is found; which, accord-
 ing to his own description, includes the
whole cause of the impulse, or every thing
 that contributes to its being impelled. And
 of these two circumstances, viz. the incli-
 nation of the mind, and the view in which
 an object is presented to it, it is the *latter*
 that is generally, and in a more especial
 sense, called the *motive*, and compared to
 the *impeller* (to use Dr. Price’s language)
 while the inclination, or disposition, of the
 mind, is only considered as a *circumstance*
 which gives the motive an opportunity of
 acting upon it, or impelling it, and pro-
 ducing its proper effect. In this I appeal,
 as before, to the common sense of man-
 kind.

But, without regard to popular ideas, which Dr. Price may say are often founded on prejudice, and false views of things, I would consider this matter with him as a *mathematician*, and a *philosopher*; and I think I can shew him that, according to the mode of reasoning universally received by the most *speculative*, as well as the *vulgar*, we ought to consider *motives* as the proper *causes* of human actions, though it is the *man* that is called the *agent*.

Suppose a philosopher to be entirely ignorant of the constitution of the human mind, but to see, as Dr. Price acknowledges, that men do, in fact, act according to their *affections* and *desires*, i. e. in one word, according to *motives*, would he not, as in a case of the doctrine of chances, immediately infer that there must be a *fixed cause* for this coincidence of motives and actions? Would he not say that, though he could not see into the man, the connection was *natural*, and *necessary*, because *constant*? And since the motives, in all cases, *precede* the actions, would he not naturally, i. e. according to the custom of
philoso-

philosophers in similar cases, say that the motive was the cause of the action? And would he not be led by the obvious analogy to compare the mind to a balance, which was inclined this way or that, according to the motives presented to it.

It makes no difference to say that the motive does not *immediately* produce the action. It is enough if it necessarily produce the immediate cause of the action, or the cause of the immediate cause, &c. for example, if the motive excite the *desire*, the desire determine the *will*, and the will produce the *action*. For contrive as many mediums of this kind as you please, it will still follow, that the action is *ultimately* according to the motive, *flows from it*, or *depends upon it*; and therefore, in proper philosophical language, the motive ought to be called the *proper cause* of the action. It is as much so as any thing in nature is the cause of any thing else.

Since the common language of men corresponds to this view of the subject, it is a proof that, in fact, men do see it in

this light. And if they do not pursue this doctrine to its distant and necessary consequences, it is for want of sufficient reflection, or strength of mind. Indeed, this one simple truth, respecting the necessary influence of motives on the human mind, leads us much beyond the apprehensions of the *vulgar*; but not to any thing that ought to alarm the *philosopher*, or the *christian*. The foundation is a truth grounded on universal experience and observation, and we have no need to fear any fair consequences from it.

SECTION VI.

Whether Liberty be essential to PRACTICAL VIRTUE; and of MORAL and PHYSICAL NECESSITY.

IT is on a mere verbal distinction, also, on which every thing that Dr. Price has advanced, in proof of *liberty being essential to practical virtue*, turns. “Practical
 “virtue,” he says (p. 302) “supposes
 “liberty. A being who cannot *act* at all,
 3 “most

“ most certainly cannot act virtuously or
 “ viciously. Now, as far as it is true of a
 “ being that he acts, so far he must *himself*
 “ be the cause of the action, and therefore
 “ not *necessarily determined* to act—Deter-
 “ mination requires an *efficient cause*. If
 “ this cause be the being himself, I plead
 “ for no more. If not, then it is no lon-
 “ ger *his* determination, i. e. he is no lon-
 “ ger the *determiner*, but the motive, or
 “ whatever else any one will maintain to
 “ be the cause of the determination—In
 “ short, who must not feel the absurdity
 “ of saying *my volitions are produced by a*
 “ *foreign cause*, i. e. are not mine. I deter-
 “ mine voluntarily, and yet necessarily.”

Here we have the same arbitrary account
 of *agency* that has been considered before.
 For this is the very same whether the ob-
 ject of choice be of a *moral* nature or not,
 whether it relates to two different kinds of
 fruit, or to virtuous or vicious actions.
 In fact, if a virtuous resolution be formed,
 the person by whom it is formed, is the ob-
 ject of my complacence and reward, and if
 a vicious choice be made, the person is the
 object

object of my abhorrence; and there is the greatest propriety and use in punishing him. And I appeal to the common sense of mankind, if it would make any difference in the case, whether it be said that the proper cause of the action was the *motive*, or the *being himself* actuated by the motive, since both were necessary to the action; and, as will be shewn in a following section, a person supposed to act without the influence of any motive, would not be considered as the object of praise or blame, reward or punishment at all.

Dr. Price is as unfortunate in his appeal to the common use of words in this case as on the two former occasions. "Who" says he, "must not feel the absurdity of saying *my volition was produced by a foreign cause?*" meaning a *motive*. Now this is actually the common language of all the world, and nobody feels any absurdity in it: because the consequences he draws from it by no means follow, viz. that then the volition is not *my own*. It is *my volition*, whatever was the motive
that

that produced it, if it was a volition that took place in *my mind*.

The distinction which this writer makes between a *moral* and a *physical necessity* is equally useless as that concerning the proper seat of agency, or causation. If a man's mind be so formed, whether it be by *nature*, or *art*, that he shall, in all cases, accede to every virtuous proposal, and decline every thing vicious; if the choice be really *his own*, and not that of any other for him, we love and approve his character, and see the greatest propriety in rewarding him. And the case is not at all altered by saying, that the necessity by which he acts is a *physical* or *moral* one. These are but words. If the choice be certain, and truly necessary, it is a proof that with that disposition of mind no other choice could be made; and whatever consequences are drawn from the consideration of the impossibility of any other choice being made, applies to this case, if to any. And yet, in the following extract, Dr. Price considers actions as *truly necessary*, and yet in the highest degree *virtuous*; and not directly

rectly treating of *agency* in this place, and therefore, being, perhaps, a little off his guard, it is remarkable that he expresses himself in a manner by no means suited to his system, but as if the proper cause of the actions was the motives that led to them; though a little before he had represented it as the greatest absurdity to say that a man can determine *voluntarily*, and yet *necessarily*.

“ By the necessity which is said to diminish the virtue of good actions must be meant not a *natural* (which would take away the whole idea of *action* and *will*) but a *moral necessity*, or such as arises from the *influence of motives*, and *affections of the mind*, or that *certainty* of determining one way which may take place upon the supposition of certain views, circumstances, and principles of an agent. Now it is undeniable that the very greatest *necessity* of this sort is consistent with, nay is implied in, the idea of the most *perfect and meritorious virtue*; and consequently can by no means be what, of itself, ever lessens it. The

“ more

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“ more confidently we may depend upon
“ a being’s doing an action when con-
“ vinced of its propriety, whatever obsta-
“ cles may lie in his way, or, morally
“ speaking, the *more efficacious and uncon-*
“ *querable the influence of conscience* is within
“ him, the more amiable we must think
“ him.

“ In like manner, the most abandoned
“ and detestable state of wickedness implies
“ the greatest *necessity of sinning*, and the
“ greatest degree of moral impotence. He
“ is the most vicious man who is so en-
“ flaved by vicious habits, or in whom
“ appetite has so far gained the ascendant,
“ and a regard to virtue and duty is so far
“ weakened, that we can at any time, *with*
“ *certainty*, foretell that he will do evil,
“ when tempted to it. Let me, therefore,
“ by the way, remark, that every idea of
“ liberty must be very erroneous, which
“ makes it inconsistent with the most abso-
“ lute and complete certainty, or *necessity*,
“ of the kind that I have now taken notice
“ of, or which supposes it to overthrow all
“ steadiness of character, or conduct. The
“ greatest

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“ greatest influence of motives that can ra-
 “ tionally be conceived, or which it is pos-
 “ sible for any one to maintain, without
 “ running into the palpable and intolera-
 “ ble absurdity of making them *physical*
 “ *efficients*, or *agents*, can no way affect
 “ liberty. And it is surely very surprizing
 “ that our most *willing determinations*
 “ should be imagined to have most of the
 “ appearance of not proceeding from our-
 “ selves, and that what a man does with
 “ the fullest consent of his will, with the
 “ least reluctance, and the greatest desire
 “ and resolution, he should, for that very
 “ reason, be suspected not to do *freely*, i. e.
 “ *not to do at all.*”

As a professed necessarian, I would not
 wish to use any other language than this.
 But it does not appear to me to be the pro-
 per language of an advocate for metaphy-
 sical liberty, and of that kind of liberty
 being essential to virtue, to talk of virtue
arising from the influence of motives, and
affections of mind, or of the efficacious and
unconquerable influence of conscience. What
 evidence is there in all this of a *self-deter-*
mining

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mining power, acting independently of all motives, of all judgment, or desire, and of the importance of this power to virtue? Here we have the most perfect virtue established on principles, on which it must be allowed, that it could never be proved, or made to appear, that any such self-determining power existed.

Dr. Price allows that were all men perfectly virtuous, or perfectly vicious, all their actions would be *necessary*, and might with certainty be foretold; their inward disposition, and situation being together sufficient to account for all their conduct. It is plain, therefore, that when he does not use the language of a *system*, a *full consent of the will*, though produced by the *efficacious and unconquerable influence of conscience*, that is, of *motives*, is sufficient to constitute virtue. Here, therefore, we see the most perfect virtue arising from the most absolute necessity, that is, if there be any meaning in words, virtue, without a possibility of a man's acting otherwise than he does, i. e. without his having a power, *disposed as he was*, to act otherwise.

If

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“ greatest influence of motives that can ra-
 “ tionally be conceived, or which it is pos-
 “ sible for any one to maintain, without
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 “ *efficients*, or *agents*, can no way affect
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If this be not a just inference, I do not know what is. But how this agrees with what he observes (p. 303) I do not see, He there says, “It has always been the general, and it has evidently been the natural, sense of mankind, that they cannot be accountable for what they have no power to avoid. Nothing can be more glaringly absurd than applauding or reproaching ourselves for what we were no more the cause of, than of our own beings, and what it was no more possible for us to prevent, than the return of the seasons, or the revolutions of the planets.”

This is so expressed, as if the *disposition of mind*, which is one necessary cause of mens resolutions and actions, was not at all concerned; but, taking in this circumstance, to which Dr. Price himself allows a *certain and necessary operation*, that which he here calls a *glaring absurdity* is precisely his own principle, unless he will say that a man is not accountable for the most *abandoned and detestable wickedness*, which he expressly says implies the greatest *necessity of sinning*. In fact, it is only where
the

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the necessity of sinning arises from some *other cause* than a *man's own disposition of mind*, that we ever say there is any impropriety in punishing a man for his conduct. If the impossibility of acting well has arisen from a *bad disposition*, or *habit*, its having been impossible, *with that disposition*, or *habit*, to act virtuously, is never any reason for our forbearing punishment: because we know that punishment is proper to correct that disposition, and that habit, and that we thereby both reform the sinner, and warn others, which are all the just ends of punishment; every thing else deserving no other name than vengeance, and being manifestly absurd, because answering no good purpose. At the same time, punishment used with this view will be administered with the utmost tenderness and compassion.

I would farther take the liberty to observe, that Dr. Price's opinion of *liberty being essential to virtue* has led him to adopt an idea of it that is inconsistent with what he himself has acknowledged concerning the most perfect virtue, arising from the in-

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fluence of motives, and affections of mind.
 “Instinctive benevolence” he says (p. 318)
 “is no principle of virtue, nor are any ac-
 “tions flowing merely from it virtuous.
 “As far as this influences, so far some-
 “thing else than *reason* and *goodness* influen-
 “ces, and so much I think is to be subtract-
 “ed from the moral worth of any action or
 “character. This is very agreeable to the
 “common sentiments and determinations
 “of mankind.” And again (p. 324) “The
 “conclusion I would establish is, that the
 “virtue of an agent is always less in pro-
 “portion to the degree in which *natural*
 “*temper, and propensities* fall in with his
 “actions, *instinctive principles* operate, and
 “*rational reflection on what is right* to be
 “done is wanting.”

Now what is the difference between *af-
 fections of mind*, from which, he says, arises
 the most perfect and meritorious virtue,
 and *instinctive benevolence, natural temper,*
 and *propensity*? For my own part, I see
 no difference, but that the former compre-
 hends the latter. For what is *instinctive*
benevolence, or natural temper, and propen-
sity,

sity, but *particular affections of mind*? Also the language of the former paragraph, and not of this, which is the very reverse of it, is, I am confident, agreeable to the common sentiments and determinations of mankind.

Mankind in general do not refine so much as Dr. Price. Whatever it is *within a man* that leads him to virtue, and that will certainly and necessarily incline him to act right, or to do what they approve, they deem to be a *virtuous principle*, to be the *foundation of merit*, and to *intitle to reward*. If they allow a man more merit for having *acquired* this disposition or propensity, than upon the supposition of his having been *born* with it, it is because they suppose some *prior disposition* to acquire it, and so strong as to have overcome considerable obstacles to the acquiring of it. But this is only carrying the principle of virtue, the foundation of merit, and of a title to reward a little higher. The *nature* of it is still the very same. Men are charmed with a virtuous conduct, with the principle that was the cause of it, with the prin-

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ciple that was the cause of that principle,
and so on, as far as you please to go.

The only reason why we are less struck with a virtuous action proceeding from what is called *natural temper*, is because we consider it as a *fickle principle*, on which we can have no sufficient dependance for the future. But let that principle be supposed to be really *fixed* and *stable*, and wherein does it differ from that disposition of mind which is the result of the greatest labour and attention?

If two men be in all respects *the same inwardly*, if they *feel*, and *act* precisely in the same manner, upon all occasions; how, in the sight of God or man, can there be more virtue in the *present conduct* of the one than in that of the other, whatever difference there may *have been* with respect to the *acquisition* of that temper? Every thing that is so confirmed as to become *habitual*, operates exactly like what is called *instinct* (for my own part, I believe them to be, in all cases, the very same thing) but does a course of virtue become less virtuous,

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ous, in consequence of being *persisted in*, and consequently being a more *easy* and *mechanical thing*? Yet this is the natural conclusion from Dr. Price's principles. Valerius Paterculus, as is observed by Mr. Hobbes (*Works*, p. 476) praises Cato because he was good *by nature, et quia aliter esse non potuit*.

These maxims take away all virtue, goodness and merit from the *greatest and best of all beings*, and likewise make it absurd to *pray for virtue*; since nothing that is *communicated* can be intitled to that appellation. And surely the common ideas and practices of mankind, at least of christians, reprobate the notion. In fact, it is mere *Heathen Stoicism*, which allows men to pray for *external things*, but admonishes them that, as for *virtue*, it is our own, and must arise from *within ourselves*, if we have it at all. And yet Dr. Price, I know, prays, like other christians, and with the *humility* of a necessarian, who considers every thing belonging to him, *temper, will, and conduct*, as the gift of God, and himself as nothing more than the *instrument*

(though at the same time the *object*) of his gracious designs. And as I am not alarmed at the *moral influence* of *his* opinions, I hope he will not be alarmed at *mine*.

I wish Dr. Price would consider for a few minutes (and a very few, I should think, would suffice) what this *self-determining power*, of which he makes so great a boast, can be. By his own confession it is not *judgment*, it is not *conscience*, it is not *affection*, it is not *desire*, it is not *hope* or *fear*, nor consequently any of the *passions*. It must, therefore, be *mere will*, under no direction or guidance, because, under no *influence* whatever; and of what *value*, or *use*, can such a principle be? Supposing the thing possible (as I deem it to be absolutely impossible that the will should act without judgment, conscience, affection, or any other motive) the determination, though dignified with the appellation of *self*, cannot be any thing but a mere *random decision*, which may be good or bad, favourable or unfavourable to us, like the chance of a die, and cannot possibly be of a nature to be intitled to praise or blame,
merit

merit or demerit, reward or punishment. I cannot, therefore, persuade myself that a wise and benevolent author would have given man a power so intirely *insignificant to every valuable purpose*, and of such a nature too, that *himself*, that *wisdom* and *power in the abstract*, could not controul.

I also wish Dr. Price would consider in what sense a determination of his mind can be said to be more *his own*, on account of its not having been produced by previous *motives*, but in a manner independent of all motives, or reasons, for choice. For my part, I own that, supposing the thing to be *possible*, as I conceive it to be naturally impossible, I cannot see either any thing to *boast* of in such a determination, or any foundation for *property* in it. If nothing in the preceding state of his mind (which would come under the description of *motive*) contributed to it, how did *he* contribute to it? and therefore in what sense can he call it *his*? If he reject a determination produced by motives, because motives are *no part of himself*, he must likewise give up all claim to a determination produced

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without motives, because that also would be produced without the help of any thing belonging to himself. If the former have a *foreign cause*, and therefore he cannot claim it, the latter has *no cause at all*, and is, therefore, what neither himself, nor any other person, can claim.

But the thing itself is absolutely chimerical ; a power of determining *without motive*, or a proper self-determining power, without any regard to judgment, conscience, or affection, is impossible. It is to suppose an *effect* without a *cause*. The supposition is contrary to all experience and observation : and if we only admit this one undeniable *fact*, viz. that the will cannot properly determine *itself*, but is always determined by *motives*, that is, by the present disposition of the mind, and the views of things presented to it, it cannot be any other than a *necessary* determination, subject to laws as strict and invariable as those of mechanics. There cannot possibly be any medium in the case. If we always choose that object, or that action, which, *on whatever account*, appears *preferable* at the
moment

moment of making the choice, it will always be determined by some *invariable rule*, depending upon the *state of the mind*, and the *ideas present to it*; and it will never be equally in our power to choose two things, when all the previous circumstances are the very same,

SECTION VII.

Of the Propriety of REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS, and the Foundation of Praise and Blame, on the Scheme of Necessity.

THE objection to the doctrine of necessity that has weighed the most with those who have considered the subject, is that, if mens' determinations and actions flow necessarily from the previous state of their minds, and the motives, or influences, to which they are exposed, the idea of *responsibility*, or *accountableness* vanishes, and there can be no propriety or use of *rewards* or *punishments*.

Now

Now I hope to make it appear that, when the case is rightly understood, there can be no use or propriety of rewards or punishments on any other scheme, but the greatest possible upon this.

In order to make this clearly apprehended, let us suppose two minds constructed, as I may say, upon the principles of the two opposite schemes of *liberty* and *necessity*; all the determinations of the one being invariably directed by its previous dispositions, and the motives presented to it, while the other shall have a power of determining, in all cases, in a manner independent of any such previous disposition or motives; which is precisely the difference between the systems of necessity and liberty, philosophically and strictly defined. To avoid circumlocution, let us call the former A and the latter B. I will farther suppose myself to be a father, and these two my children; and, knowing their inward make and constitution, let us consider how I should treat them.

My

My object is to make them virtuous and happy. All my precepts, and the whole of my discipline, are directed to that end. For the use of discipline is by the hope of something that the subjects of it know to be good, or the fear of something that they know to be evil, to engage them to act in such a manner as the person who has the conduct of that discipline well knows to be for their good *ultimately*, though they cannot see it. In other words, I must make use of *present good*, and *present evil*, in order to secure their *future* and *greatest good*; the former being within the apprehension of my children, and the latter lying beyond it, and being known to myself only. This I take to be precisely the nature of *discipline*; the person who conducts it being supposed to have more knowledge, experience, and judgment, than those who are subject to it.

Now, since motives have a certain and necessary influence on the mind of A, I know that the prospect of good will certainly incline him to do what I recommend to him, and the fear of evil will deter him
from

from any thing that I wish to dissuade him from; and therefore I bring him under the course of discipline above described with the greatest hope of success. Other influences, indeed, to which he may be exposed, and that I am not aware of, may counteract my views, and thereby my object *may* be frustrated; but, notwithstanding this, my discipline will, likewise, have its *certain* and *necessary effect*; counteracting in part, at least, all foreign and unfavourable influence, and therefore cannot be wholly lost upon him. Every promise and every threatening, every reward and every punishment, judiciously administered, works to my end. If this discipline be sufficient to overcome any foreign influence, I engage my son in a *train of proper actions*, which, by means of the *mechanical structure of his mind*, will, at length, form a stable *habit*, which insures my success.

But in my son B I have to do with a creature of quite another make, motives have no necessary or certain influence upon his determinations, and in all cases where
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the principle of *freedom from the certain influence of motives* takes place, it is exactly an equal chance whether my promises or threatenings, my rewards or punishments, determine his actions or not. The *self-determining power* is not at all of the nature of any mechanical influence, that may be counteracted by influences equally mechanical, but is a thing with respect to which I can make no sort of calculation, and against which I can make no provision. Even the longest continued series of proper actions will form no *habit* that can be depended upon; and therefore, after all my labour and anxiety, my object is quite precarious and uncertain.

If we suppose that B is *in some degree* determined by motives, in that very degree, and no other, is he a proper subject of discipline; and he can never become *wholly so*, till his self-determining power be entirely discharged, and he comes to be the same kind of being with A, on whom motives of all kinds have a certain and necessary influence. Had I the making of
my

my own children, they should certainly be all constituted like A, and none of them like B.

Besides, the discipline of A will have a suitable influence on all that are constituted like him, so that *for their sakes*, as well as on the account of A himself, I ought to bring him under this salutary treatment. And thus all the ends of discipline are answered, and rewards and punishments have the greatest *propriety*; because they have the fullest *effect* upon the doctrine of necessity; whereas it is evident they are absolutely lost, having no effect whatever, upon the opposite scheme.

This appears to me to be the fairest and the most unexceptionable view of the subject, by which it appears that the Divine Being, the father of us all, in order to make us the proper subjects of discipline, and thereby secure our greatest happiness, (which is all that, philosophically speaking, is really meant by making us *accountable creatures*) must constitute us in such a manner, as that motives shall have a certain
and

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and necessary influence upon our minds, and must not leave us at liberty to be influenced by them or not, at our arbitrary pleasure.

I do not think it is properly necessary to add any thing more on this subject; but because this question has (perhaps more than any other in the whole compass of philosophical discussion) been rendered obscure by an unfair and improper manner of stating, I shall give another view of it; by which I hope it will appear, that there is all the foundation that we can wish for a proper *accountableness*, and for *praise* and *blame* upon the doctrine of necessity, and not so much as a shadow of any real foundation for them upon any other supposition; the boasted advantage of the doctrine of *liberty* belonging, in fact, to the doctrine of *necessity* only; and I am confident that my ideas on this subject are, at the same time, those of the *vulgar*, and agreeable to *sound philosophy*, while those of the metaphysicians, who have adopted a contrary opinion, are founded on a mere *fallacy*.

When

When I, or the world at large, *praise* my son A, we tell him we admire his *excellent disposition*, in consequence of which all good motives have a certain, and never-failing influence upon his mind, always determining his choice to what is virtuous and honourable, and that his conduct is not directed either by mere *will*, or the *authority of any other person*, but proceeds from his own virtuous disposition only; and that his good habits are so confirmed, that neither promises nor threatenings are able to draw him aside from his duty.

In this representation I am confident that I keep back nothing that is essential. The ideas of mankind in general never go beyond this, when they praise any person, nor, philosophically speaking, *ought* they to do it. Praise that is founded on any other principles is really *absurd*, and if it was understood by the vulgar, would be reprobated by them, as intirely repugnant to their conceptions of it. This will clearly appear by considering the case of my son B.

We

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We have supposed that A has done a virtuous action, and has been *commended*, because it proceeded from the *bent of his mind to virtue*, so that whenever proper circumstances occurred, he *necessarily* did what we wished him to have done. Let us now suppose that B does the very same thing; but let it be fully understood, that the *cause* of his right determination was not any bias or *disposition of mind* in favour of virtue, or because a good *motive* influenced him to do it; but that his determination was produced by something within him (call it by what name you please) of a quite *different nature*, with respect to which motives of any kind have no sort of influence or effect, a mere *arbitrary pleasure*, without any reason whatever (for a *reason* is a *motive*) and I apprehend he would no more be thought a proper subject of praise, notwithstanding he should do what was *right in itself*, than the dice, which, by a fortunate throw, should give a man an estate. It is true the action was right, but there was not the *proper principle*, and *motive*, which are the only just foundations of praise.

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In short, where the proper *influence of motives* ceases, the proper foundation of praise and blame disappears with it; and a *self-determining power*, supposed to act in a manner independent of motive, and even contrary to every thing that comes under that description, is a thing quite foreign to every idea that bears the least relation to praise or blame. A good action produced in this manner is no indication of a *good disposition of mind*, inclined to yield to the influence of good impressions, and therefore is nothing on which I can depend for the future. Even a series of good actions, produced in this manner, gives no security for a proper conduct in future instances; because such actions can form no *habit*, i. e. *no necessary tendency to a particular conduct*; but every thing is liable to be reversed by this self-determining principle, which can turn a deaf ear to all motives, and all reasons.

So difficult is it to get out of the road of common sense, that even philosophical persons will farther deceive themselves, by saying that the self-determining power is influenced by motives, and does
not

not determine *absolutely at random*. But if this be a *proper influence*, there can be no proper self-determining power, except by self-determination be understood what the world in general always does understand by it, viz. a power of determination not subject to the controul of *others*, but produced by causes operating within a man's self only. If when the *state of mind*, and every *idea* present to it, are precisely the same, there be a power of forming either of two contrary resolutions (which is the case if *necessary determination* be excluded) it is plain that the proper *cause* of the resolution, that which actually *decided* in the case, could not be any thing either in the *state of the mind* itself, or any *idea* present to it (because, notwithstanding these circumstances, there is a power of determining either agreeable, or contrary to their natural influence) and therefore could not be any thing to which mankind have ever attributed either praise or blame. It is never the *action*, but the *disposition of mind*, and the *motive* that makes any thing *meritorious*; and here the determination was not caused either by the state of mind, or any motive whatever.

I will venture to say that, let this case be stated with ever so much address and refinement, it will still be found that there cannot be any just foundation for praise, but upon a scheme which supposes the mind to be so disposed, as that just views of things will necessarily determine the will to right action. The two schemes of liberty and necessity admit of no medium between them. But if any kind of medium be supposed, in which something shall be allowed to the influence of *motive*, and something to the *self-determining power*, acting independently of motive, still all the *virtue* and *merit*, all the foundation for *praise*, takes place just so far as necessity takes place, and fails just so far as this imaginary *liberty of choice*, acting independently of motives, interferes to obstruct it.

It has been seen that *punishment* would have no propriety or use upon the doctrine of philosophical liberty; *blame* also, upon the same scheme, would be equally absurd and ill founded. If my child A acts wrong, I tell him that I am exceedingly displeased, because he has shown a *disposition of mind*

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on which motives to virtue have no sufficient influence, that he appears to have such a *propensity to vicious indulgences*, that I am afraid he is irreclaimable, and that his utter ruin will be the consequence of it. This is the proper language of blame; and upon a mind constituted like that of A, may have a good effect, as well as the discipline of punishment,

But if the constitution of the mind of B be attended to, it will be seen that blame is equally absurd, as punishment is unavailing. If he has acted the same part that A has done, the language which I addressed to A will not apply to him. It is true that he has done what is wrong, and it must have bad consequences; but it was not from any *bad disposition of mind*, that made him subject to be influenced by bad impressions. No, his determination had a cause of quite *another nature*. It was a choice directed by *no bad motive whatever*, but a mere *will*, acting independently of any motive; and which, though it has been on the side of vice to-day, may be on the side of virtue to-morrow. My blame

or reproaches, therefore, being ill founded, and incapable of having any effect, it is my wisdom to withhold them, and wait the uncertain issue with patience.

If this be not a just, impartial, and philosophical state of this case, I do not know what is so; and by this means it appears, that the doctrine of the *necessary influence of motives* upon the mind of man makes him the proper subject of discipline, reward and punishment, praise and blame, both in the common and philosophical use of the words; and the doctrine of *self-determination*, independent of the influence of motives, intirely disqualifies a man from being the proper subject of them.

It is said that the nature of *remorse* implies a self-determining power. I answer, that this is no other than the same deception that I have explained before. For blaming *ourselves*, or blaming *another*, are things of the very same nature, and depend upon the same principles. The sense of *self-reproach*, and *shame*, is excited by our finding that we have a disposition

position of mind leading to vice, and on which motives to virtue, in particular cases, have had no influence.

If I blame myself for any thing else, viz. for not exerting a *self-determining power*, by which I may suppose that I might have acted otherwise, independently of the previous disposition of mind, and the motives then present to it, the idea is not at all adapted to excite any proper remorse. For it has been shewn to afford no foundation for blame whatever, and, in the nature of things, cannot possibly do it. For on this supposition there is nothing *vicious*, or blame-worthy, that is the proper *cause* of the action, but something that bears *no sort of relation to morality*. Morals depend upon *inward dispositions of mind*, and *good or bad habits*; but this *self-determination* is a thing capable of counteracting all dispositions, and all habits, and not by means of *contrary dispositions* and *contrary habits*, but by a *power of quite another nature*, to which the properties of dispositions and habits, such as approbation, or disapproba-

tion, in a moral sense, or praise or blame, cannot possibly belong.

A man, indeed, when he reproaches himself for any *particular action* in his past conduct, may fancy that, if he was in the same situation again, he would have acted differently. But this is a mere *deception*; and if he examines himself *strictly*, and takes in all circumstances, he may be satisfied that, with the *same inward disposition of mind*, and with precisely *the same views of things*, that he had then, and exclusive of all others that he has acquired by reflection *since*, he could not have acted otherwise than he did.

But will this conviction at all lessen his sense of *grief*, or *shame*? On the contrary, it will only more fully satisfy him, that his dispositions and habit of mind *at that time* were so bad, that the vicious action was *unavoidable*. And the sense he now has of this deplorable state of his mind, and the alarming tendency of it, will operate so as to make him act better, and become better disposed for the future; so that, upon another

ther similar occasion, he would not do what he did before. And is not this all the benefit that a man can possibly derive from a sense of shame, and self-reproach, commonly called remorse of conscience?

Thus I hope I have made good what I advanced on this subject in my *Examination of the Writings of Drs. Reid, Beattie and Oswald*, p. 178. "As to the hack-
 "neyed objection to the doctrine of ne-
 "cessity, from its being inconsistent with
 "the idea of virtue and vice, praise and
 "blame, it may be fully retorted upon its
 "opponents. For as to their boasted *self-*
 "*determining power* (were the thing possi-
 "ble in itself, and did not imply an absur-
 "dity) by which they pretend to have a
 "power of acting independently of every
 "thing that comes under the description
 "of *motive*, I scruple not to say, that it
 "is as foreign to every idea of virtue and
 "vice, praise or blame, as the grossest
 "kind of mechanism, that the most blun-
 "dering writer in defence of liberty ever
 "ascribed to the advocates for moral neces-
 "sity."

As

As different representations of the same thing, and different views of it affect the mind differently, and a view that does not at all strike one person may strike another, I shall conclude this section with some just observations of Mr. Hume, and others of Mr. Search, and Lord Kaimes, relating to the subject of it.

“Actions”, says Mr. Hume, (*Philosophical Essays*, p. 155) “are, by their very
 “nature, temporary and perishing; and
 “where they proceed not from some cause,
 “in the *character* and *disposition* of the
 “person who performed them, they can
 “neither redound to his honour, if good,
 “nor infamy, if evil. The *actions* them-
 “selves may be blameable, they may be
 “contrary to the rules of morality and re-
 “ligion, but the *person* is not responsible
 “for them. And as they proceeded from
 “nothing in him that is *durable*, and *con-*
 “*stant*, and leave nothing of that nature
 “behind them, it is impossible he can, on
 “that account, become the object of pu-
 “nishment, or vengeance. According to
 “the principle, therefore, which denies
 “*necef-*

“ *necessity*, and consequently *causes*, a man
 “ is as pure and untainted after having
 “ committed the most horrid crime, as at
 “ the first moment of his birth ; nor is his
 “ *character* any way concerned in his *ac-*
 “ *tions*, since they are not derived from it,
 “ and the wickedness of the one can never
 “ be used as a proof of the depravity of the
 “ other.”

“ Men are not blamed,” he says, p.
 156, “ for such actions as they perform
 “ *ignorantly*, and *casually*, whatever may
 “ be the consequences. Why? but be-
 “ cause the principles of these actions are
 “ only *momentary*, and terminate in them
 “ only. Men are less blamed for such evil
 “ actions as they perform *hastily*, and *un-*
 “ *premeditatedly*, than for such as proceed
 “ from *thought* and *deliberation*. For what
 “ reason? but because a hasty temper,
 “ though a constant cause, is a principle of
 “ the mind, that operates only by *intervals*,
 “ and infects not the *whole character*.”

“ Freedom of action,” says Mr. Search
 (*Light of Nature*, vol. 5. p. 233) “ and
 “ so

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“ so much understanding as to make the
 “ party sensible for what the punishment
 “ was inflicted, are always deemed neces-
 “ sary requisites to render him obnoxious
 “ thereto; because punishment operating
 “ upon the *imagination*, and through that
 “ upon the *will*, where either of these two
 “ characters are wanting, becomes useless,
 “ and consequently unjust. Therefore,
 “ sly revenges, which may be mistaken for
 “ accidents, and nobody can know they
 “ were the effect of resentment, though
 “ sometimes practised by spiteful persons,
 “ have never been holden warrantable by
 “ the judicious. Nor will a righteous man
 “ punish where the transgressor had not
 “ liberty of choice, nor where the reason
 “ of his punishing cannot be understood.

“ In none of the works of providence,” says
 Lord Kaims, “ so far as we can penetrate, is
 “ there displayed a deeper reach of art and
 “ wisdom, than in the laws of action peculiar
 “ to man, as a thinking and rational being.
 “ Were he left loose, to act in contradic-
 “ tion to motives, there would be no place
 “ for prudence, foresight, nor for adjust-
 “ ing

PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY. 93

“ ing means to an end. It could not be
“ foreseen by others what a man would do
“ the next hour, nay it could not be fore-
“ seen even by himself. Man would not
“ be capable of rewards and punishments,
“ he would not be fitted either for divine
“ or for human government, he would be
“ a creature that has no resemblance to the
“ human race. But man is not left loose :
“ for though he is at liberty to act accord-
“ ing to his own will, yet his will is regu-
“ lated by desire, and desire by what
“ pleases or displeases. This connection
“ preserves uniformity of conduct, and
“ confines human actions within the great
“ chain of causes and effects. By this ad-
“ mirable system liberty and necessity,
“ seemingly incompatible, are made per-
“ fectly concordant, fitting us for society,
“ and for government both human and
“ divine. *Sketches on Man*, vol. ii. p. 300.

“ How hard is the lot of the human spe-
“ cies to be thus tied down and fixed to
“ motives, subjected by a necessary law to
“ the choice of evil, if evil happen to be
“ the prevailing motive, or if it misleads

“ us

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“ us under the form of our greatest interest
 “ or good ! How happy to have had a free
 “ independent power of acting contrary to
 “ motives, when the prevailing motive
 “ has a bad tendency ! By this power we
 “ might have pushed our way to virtue and
 “ happiness whatever motives were sug-
 “ gested by vice and folly to draw us back,
 “ or we might by arbitrary will have re-
 “ frained from acting the bad part, though
 “ all the power of motives concurred to
 “ urge us on.

“ So far well; but let us see whither
 “ this will carry us. This arbitrary power
 “ being once supposed, may it not be
 “ exerted against good motives as well as
 “ bad ones? If it does us good by acci-
 “ dent, in restraining us from vice, may
 “ it not do us ill by accident, in restrain-
 “ ing us from virtue, and so shall we not
 “ be thrown loose altogether? At this rate
 “ no man could be depended upon. Pro-
 “ mises, oaths, vows, would be in vain :
 “ for nothing can ever bind or fix a man
 “ who is influenced by no motive. The
 “ distinction of characters would be at an
 “ end :

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“ end: for a person cannot have a cha-
“ racter, who has no fixed or uniform
“ principle of action. Nay, moral virtue
“ itself, and all the force of law, rule, and
“ obligation, would, upon this hypothesis,
“ be nothing. For no creature can be the
“ subject of rational or moral government
“ whose actions, by the constitution of its
“ nature, are independent of motives, and
“ whose will is capricious and arbitrary.
“ To exhort, to instruct, to promise, or to
“ threaten, would be to no purpose. In
“ short, such a creature, if such could
“ exist, would be a most bizarre and un-
“ accountable being, a mere absurdity in
“ nature, whose existence could serve no
“ end.

“ Were we so constituted as always to be
“ determined by the moral sense, even
“ against the strongest counter-motives,
“ this would be consistent with human na-
“ ture; because it would preserve intire the
“ connection that, by an unalterable law,
“ is established betwixt the will and the
“ prevailing motive. But to break this
“ connection altogether, to introduce an
“ unbound-

“unbounded arbitrary liberty, in opposi-
 “tion to which motives should not have
 “influence, would be, instead of amend-
 “ing, to deform and unhinge the whole
 “constitution. No reason have we, there-
 “fore, to regret that we find the will ne-
 “cessarily subjected to motives. The truth
 “of this general position must coincide
 “with our wish, unless we would rather
 “have man to be a whimsical and ridicul-
 “ous, than a rational and moral being.”
*Essays on the Principles of Morality and Na-
 tural Religion, p. 177.*

SECTION VIII.

*How far Mens' GENERAL CONDUCT will
 be influenced by the Belief of the Doctrine
 of Necessity.*

IT is imagined by some, that the appre-
 hension of all the actions of men de-
 pending upon motives which necessarily
 influence their determinations, so that no
 action or event could possibly be other-
 wise than it *has been, is, or is to be*, would
 make

make men indifferent with respect to their conduct, or to what befalls them in life. I answer, so it would, if their *own actions*, and *determinations* were not necessary links in this chain of causes and events, and if their good or bad success did not, in the strictest sense of the word, *depend upon themselves*.

But this being the case, the apprehension that their endeavours to promote their own happiness will have a certain and necessary effect, and that no well-judged effort of theirs will be lost, instead of disposing them to remit their labour, will encourage them to exert themselves with redoubled vigour; and the *desire of happiness* cannot but be allowed to have the same influence upon all systems.

With respect to the temper and disposition of mind, considered in a *moral respect*, a man has, certainly, more encouragement to take pains to improve it, when he is sensible that, according to the settled constitution, and established laws of nature, it depends *entirely upon himself* whether it

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be

be improved or not; that his negligence will be followed by necessary and certain ruin, whereas his circumspection, resolution, and perseverance, will be attended with as certain and necessary success; things *foreign to himself* not interfering here, as they sometimes do in the conduct of *civil affairs*, to disappoint the best concerted schemes.

All this may perhaps be made more intelligible by an example. I shall therefore endeavour to give one. No man entertains a doubt but that every thing relating to *vegetation* is subject to the *established laws of nature*; and supposing this to be the case with respect to the human mind, and its operations, a being of perfect intelligences and foresight, will know how we shall be provided for the next or any future year; so that in fact our provision for the next year, and all the events of it, are absolutely fixed, and nothing can interfere to make it otherwise than it is to be. But will any farmer, believing this ever so firmly, neglect, on this account, to sow his fields, and content himself with saying,
 “ God

PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY. 99

“ God knows how I shall be provided for
 “ the next year? I cannot change his de-
 “ cree, and let his will be done.” We
 see, in fact, that such a persuasion never
 operates in this manner; because, though
 the chain of events is necessary, our *own de-*
terminations, and *actions* are necessary links
 of that chain. This gives the farmer the
 fullest assurance, that if it be decreed for
 him to starve, it is likewise decreed for him
 to neglect to sow his fields; but if he
do sow his fields, which depends entirely
 upon himself, that then, since the laws of
 nature are invariable, it will be evident,
 that no such unfavourable decree had gone
 forth.

In fact, the system of necessity makes
 every man the *maker of his own fortune*, in
 a stricter sense than any other system what-
 ever; and the belief of this gives a man
 greater confidence of success in all his la-
 bours, since none of them can be in vain.
 On the contrary, wherever this chain of
 the necessary connection of causes and ef-
 fects is broken, there *uncertainty* enters,

and the idea of this is always accompanied with *indifference*, or *despair*.

As our persuasion concerning the doctrine of necessity cannot make any change in our conduct with respect to *men*, whom we know we must gain to our interest by proper conduct and address, so neither can it affect our behaviour with respect to God; the mode and object of our address to both being exactly similar.

Indeed it is impossible to suppose there can be any difficulty attending the subject of *prayer*, or any branch of it, upon the supposition of the doctrine of necessity, that does not equally affect it on the general supposition of God's knowing all our wants, and being disposed to supply them, as far as it is proper that he should do it. And, with respect to this, it is sufficient to say, that the whole of our intercourse with the Deity is founded upon the idea of his condescending, for our good, to be considered by us in the familiar light of a *parent*, or *governour*. And having, for our good, assumed these characters, he will certainly

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tainly *realize* them, by requiring of us such behaviour as wise parents require of their children, and wise governors of their subjects. Now, wise parents often justly refuse to supply the wants of their children, till they solicit for it, with a proper temper of mind. But this subject I have considered more largely in my *Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion*, vol. i. p. 147. I shall, therefore, in this place only present my reader with a different view that Mr. Hobbes has given of it, on the supposition of prayer not being the *cause*, or the proper *means* of procuring any favour from God; his conduct towards us being determined on other accounts.

“Thanksgiving,” says he (*Works*, p. 477) “is no cause of the blessing past, “and that which is past is *sure* and *necessary*; yet even among men thanks is “in use, as an acknowledgment of benefits past, though we should expect no “new benefit for our gratitude; and “prayer to God Almighty is but thanksgiving for God’s blessings in general; “and though it precedes the particular

“ thing we ask, yet it is not a *cause*, or
 “ *means* of it, but a signification that we
 “ expect nothing from God, but in such
 “ manner as he, not we, will.”

Upon the whole, I am satisfied that it can only be in consequence of some gross *mis-stating of the case*, if the belief of the doctrine of necessity appear to have, in any respect, an unfavourable influence upon the mind; and, in a variety of respects, it cannot but be apparent, that it must have the happiest and noblest effects imaginable. But I purposely confine myself to what has been thought most *unpromising* in the system that I have adopted, and what is generally esteemed to be the *dark and dangerous side* of the principle. And if even this view of it, when it is considered fairly and impartially, be really favourable to it, what may we not expect from other views of this doctrine, which all the world must allow to be highly advantageous?

SECTION

SECTION IX.

Of the moral Influence of the Doctrine of Necessity.

IT has been seen that the principles on which the doctrine of necessity is founded are equally those of the vulgar, and of true philosophy. Mankind in general have no idea of volition but as preceded and directed by motives; and if they were told of any determination of the mind not produced by motives, good or bad, they would never be brought to think there could be any thing *moral*, any thing *virtuous or vicious* in it, any thing that could be the proper object of *praise or blame, reward or punishment*.

All the idea that the generality of mankind have of liberty is perfectly consistent with, and in fact flows from, the principles of moral necessity; for they mean no more by it than a freedom from the control of others, and that their volitions are

determined only by their own views of things, and influenced, or guided, by motives operating within themselves. Beyond this their ideas do not go, nor does the business of human life require that they should. They have, therefore, no apprehension of the real and unavoidable consequences of the principles they every day act upon. They would even be alarmed, and staggered, if those consequences were pointed out to them ; and perhaps, from their unwillingness to admit the consequences, would be tempted to disguise their daily feelings and experience, imagining them to be different from what they really are. This, I doubt not, is the real source of all the objections that have been made to the doctrine of necessity.

Mankind in general have also no difficulty in admitting other principles, that are not deduced from their own experience, which yet are equally incompatible with the doctrine of metaphysical liberty. They would not hesitate, for example, to admit that future events, depending upon human resolutions, may be foreknown,
and

and foretold, by a being of competent knowledge, and that there can be no effect without a cause. But when they are told that, in consequence of these concessions, they must admit that nothing *could have been* otherwise than *it has been*, that every thing comes to pass in consequence of an established constitution of things, a constitution established by the author of nature, and therefore that God is to be considered as the proper and sole cause of all things, good and evil, natural and moral, they are staggered, and withhold their assent.

From this place, therefore, the philosopher must be content to proceed by himself. But we shall see that his more comprehensive views of the system of nature are not less, but much more favourable to his improvement in virtue and happiness, than the more limited views of the bulk of mankind. They look no farther for the causes of mens' actions than to *men*; whereas the philosopher considers them as necessary instruments in the hands of the first cause. Let us now fairly trace the
confe-

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quences of this more enlarged and juster
view of things.

But previous to this, I would observe that the practical use of these philosophical views is confined to a man's *cooler moments*, when the mind is not under the influence of any violent emotion or passion. For since the mind of a philosopher is formed, and the associations by which it is influenced, are fixed exactly like those of other men, he will not be able, in the general tumult and hurry of life, to feel, think, or act, in a manner different from other men. A provocation will fix his resentment upon the person from whom it immediately proceeds, and a grateful or kind action will, in like manner, direct his love and gratitude to the person from whom it immediately comes. His own actions, also, will be considered with the same mechanical feelings of *self-applause*, or *remorse*, as if he had not been a philosopher.

What we are now to consider, therefore, are the feelings of the philosopher *retired from the world*, under the influence of no
3 violent

violent emotion, and therefore contemplating nothing very recent. Or, allowing that his philosophical views should gradually modify his feelings (as undoubtedly they will do, in proportion as they are attended to, and have an opportunity of impressing the mind) let us consider what alteration in a man's sentiments and conduct they will tend to produce; whether the change will be favourable or unfavourable, whether his philosophy will make him the better or the worse man, the better or the worse citizen.

Now, in my opinion, his philosophical views will give an elevation and force to his piety, and to virtue in all its branches, that could not have been acquired in any other way. And this may be perceived in those persons whose general views of things have approached the nearest to those that are truly philosophical, by which I mean those who, from a *principle of religion*, have ascribed more to God, and less to man, than other persons; which appears to me to have been the case very remarkably with the sacred writers, and
with

with other persons who have imbibed their devotional spirit from an intimate acquaintance with the scriptures.

That the spirit of *devotion* in general must be greatly promoted by the persuasion that God is the proper and sole cause of all things, needs no arguing. Upon this scheme we see God in every thing, and may be said to see every thing in God; because we continually view every thing as in connection with him, the author of it. By this means the idea of God will become associated with every other idea, heightening all our pleasures, and diminishing, nay absorbing and annihilating, all our pains. Also the influence of this constant and lively sense of the Divine presence and energy, attending to, disposing, and over-ruling all things, cannot but, in a variety of other respects, be most favourable and happy. It must produce the deepest *humility*, the most intire *resignation* to the will of God, and the most unre-served *confidence* in his goodness and providential care.

With

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With this disposition of mind towards God, it will not be possible to bear ill-will to any of our brethren, his offspring, or to indulge any passion, or habit, that is forbidden by God. In short, this one leading principle of devotion cannot fail to regulate the whole temper and conduct. It necessarily implies, or begets, every thing in a man's temper that is truly amiable and valuable.

Also, the full persuasion that nothing can come to pass without the knowledge and express appointment of the greatest and best of beings, must tend to diffuse a joyful *serenity* over the mind, producing a conviction, that, notwithstanding all present unfavourable appearances, *whatever is, is right*; that even all *evils*, respecting individuals or societies, any part, or the whole of the human race, will terminate in *good*; and that the greatest sum of good could not, in the nature of things, be attained by any other means.

No other than a necessarian can possibly attain to the full persuasion of this great
and

and invaluable truth, the only sure *anchor of the soul* in a time of adversity and distress, and a never-failing source of consolation under the most gloomy prospects. Upon any other hypothesis, it will be believed that many things, in which the independent uncontrolled determinations of fallible men take place are continually *going wrong*, and that much actual evil, unconnected with, and unproductive of, good, does exist. Whereas, in the eye of a necessarian, the idea of *real absolute evil* wholly disappears: since, in the contemplation of a mind possessed of a sufficient degree of comprehension, capable of considering as *one thing, one whole*, whatever is necessarily connected, all partial evils are infinitely overbalanced, and are therefore really and truly *annihilated*, in the idea of the greater good to which they are subservient, and which, when properly disposed (as by infinite wisdom they undoubtedly are) they really heighten. To a person well acquainted with the doctrine of the association of ideas, this will be no paradox, but a most important and necessary truth.

The

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The connection that all persons, and all things, necessarily have, as parts of an immense, glorious, and happy *system* (and of which we ourselves are a part, however small and inconsiderable) with the great author of this system, makes us regard every person, and every thing, in a friendly and pleasing light. The whole is but *one family*. We have all *one God and Father*, whose affection for us is intense, impartial and everlasting. He *despises nothing that he has made*, and by ways unknown to us, and often by methods the most unpromising, he provides for our greatest good. We are all training up in the same school of moral discipline, and are likewise *joint heirs of eternal life*, revealed to us in the gospel.

With such sublime views of the system, and of the author of it, as these, vice is absolutely incompatible; and more especially *hatred, envy, and malice* are wholly excluded. I cannot, as a necessarian, hate any man; because I consider him as *being*, in all respects, just what God has made him to be, and also as *doing*, with respect to
me,

me, nothing but what he was expressly designed, and appointed to do; God being the only cause, and men nothing more than the instruments in his hands, to execute all his pleasure. And by the extinction of all hatred and malice, room is made for the growth and display of every social virtue. If I no longer love men as the proper ultimate causes of the good they do me, I love and respect them as the instruments of it. I also love the amiable disposition from which it flows, both on account of its beneficial influence, and its resemblance to the disposition of the Parent of all good.

If, as a necessarian, I cease to *blame* men for their vices in the ultimate sense of the word, though, in the common and proper sense of it, I continue to do so as much as other persons (for how necessarily soever they act, they are influenced by a base and mischievous disposition of mind, against which I must guard myself and others, in proportion as I love myself and others) I, on my system, cannot help viewing them with a *tenderness* and *compassion*,
 3 that

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that will have an infinitely finer and happier effect; as it must make me more earnest and unwearied in my endeavours to reclaim them, without suffering myself to be offended, and desist from my labour through provocation, disgust, or despair.

The natures of the most vicious of mankind being the same with my own, they are as improveable as mine, and whatever their disposition be at present, it is capable of being changed for the better, by means naturally adapted to that end; and under the discipline of the universal Parent, they will, no doubt, be reclaimed, sooner or later. Looking, therefore, beyond the present temporary scene, to a future period, and their final destination, we may consider them as *brethren*; even in virtue and happiness. Their sufferings, however, in the mean time, will be in proportion to their depravity, and, for this reason, I cannot but feel myself most earnestly concerned to lessen it.

What I am describing can only take place in proportion to our *comprehension of*
I *mind,*

mind, which, however, is extended by frequent contemplations of this kind, but must remain very narrow and limited, after all the attention we can give to the subject; and therefore, the Divine Being, whose comprehension is infinite, is alone *perfectly good*, and *perfectly happy*. To him nothing is seen as an *evil*, but as a necessary and useful part of a perfect whole.

As far as these great and just views of things can be entertained and indulged, they have the happiest effect upon the mind; and where they fail, the necessarian is but like the rest of mankind, who stop at *second causes*, and thereby comes under the influence of such motives to virtue as are common to the rest of mankind.

SECTION

SECTION X.

*In what Sense GOD may be considered as
THE AUTHOR OF SIN, and of the Ob-
jection to the Doctrine of Necessity, on
that Account.*

WHEN it is considered that the distinction between things *natural* and *moral* intirely ceases on the scheme of necessity, the vices of men come under the class of common evils, producing misery for a time; but, like all other evils, in the same great system, are ultimately subservient to greater good. In this light, therefore, every thing, without distinction, may be safely ascribed to God. Whatever terminates in good, philosophically speaking, is good. But this is a view of moral evil which, though innocent, and even useful in speculation, no wise man can, or would choose to act upon himself, because our understandings are too limited for the application of such a means of good; though a being of

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infinite knowledge may introduce it with
the greatest advantage.

Vice is productive not of good, but of evil to us, both here and hereafter, and probably during the whole of our existence; though good may result from it to the whole system. While our natures, therefore, are what they are, and what association has necessarily made them, and so long as we see every thing in its true light, we must shun vice as any other evil, and indeed the greatest of all evils, and choose virtue as the greatest good. Nay we shall cultivate good dispositions with more care and attention, since, according to the fixed laws of nature, our present and future happiness necessarily depends upon it. And as to the *good of the whole universe*, or of *all mankind*, it can be no object, except to a mind capable of comprehending it. Whether we be virtuous or vicious, and consequently happy or miserable, it will be equally a necessary part of the whole, so that this consideration, were we so absurd as to pretend to govern our
conduct

conduct by it, should not bias us one way more than another.

Our supposing that God is the *author of sin* (as, upon the scheme of necessity, he must, in fact, be the author of all things) by no means implies that he is a *sinful being*, for it is the *disposition of mind*, and the *design* that constitutes the sinfulness of an action. If, therefore, his disposition and design be good, what he does is morally good. It was wicked in Joseph's brethren to sell him into Egypt, because they acted from envy, hatred, and covetousness; but it was not wicked in God, to ordain it to be so; because in appointing it he was not actuated by any such principle. In him it was gracious and good, because he did it, as we read, to *preserve life*, and to answer other great and excellent purposes in the extensive plan of his providence.

If it was proper upon the whole (and of that propriety God himself is certainly the only judge) that so important an event should be brought about by the low passions, and interested views of men, it was

right and wise in him to appoint that it should be brought about in that very manner, rather than any other; and if it be right and wise that those vices, when they have answered the great and good purposes of him who appoints and overrules all things for good, should be restrained, the sufferings which he inflicts for that purpose, are right and *just punishments*. That God might have made all men sinless, and happy, might, for any thing that we know, have been as impossible, as his making them not finite, but *infinite beings*, in all respects equal to himself.

Mr. Hume, who, in general, discusses the question concerning liberty and necessity with great clearness, intirely abandons the doctrine of necessity to the most immoral and shocking consequences; a conduct which must have tended to create a prejudice against it: but how ill founded has, I hope, been sufficiently shewn.

He says (*Philosophical Essays*, p. 157) that “upon the scheme of necessity, human
“ actions can either have no turpitude at
“ all,

“ all, as proceeding from so good a cause
 “ (the Deity) or if they can have any moral
 “ turpitude, they must involve our Creator
 “ in the same guilt, while he is acknow-
 “ ledged to be their ultimate cause and au-
 “ thor.” It is not possible” says he again,
 (p. 262) “ to explain distinctly how the
 “ Deity can be the mediate cause of all the
 “ actions of men, without being the au-
 “ thor of sin, and moral turpitude.” But
 did not this writer know, what is known
 to all the world, that the *motive*, or *inten-*
tion with which a thing is done, is the cir-
 cumstance that principally constitutes its *mo-*
rality? Men who act from a bad intention
 are certainly vicious; but though God may
 be the ultimate cause of that bad dispositi-
 on, yet, since he produces it from a *good*
motive, in order to bring good out of it, he
 is certainly not vicious, but good, and holy
 in that respect.

Mr. Hobbes, also, fails in his solution
 of this difficulty, justifying the divine con-
 duct not upon the principle of the *goodness*
of his ultimate designs in every thing that
 he appoints, but on account of his *power*

only. "Power irresistible," says he (*Works*, p. 477) "justifies all actions, really and properly, in whomsoever it be found. Less power does not, and because such power is in God only, he must needs be just in all actions; and we, that not comprehending his councils, call him to the bar, commit injustice in it."

It is possible, however, that Mr. Hobbes might not mean power simply; for when he blames men for censuring the conduct of God, when they do not comprehend his councils, he seems to intimate that, could we see the *designs* of God, in appointing and overruling the vices of men, we might see reason to approve and admire them, on account of the wisdom and goodness on which they are founded.

I would observe farther, with respect to this question, that the proper *foundation*, or rather the *ultimate object*, of virtue is *general utility*, since it consists of such conduct, as tends to make intelligent creatures the most truly happy, in the whole of their existence; though, with respect to the *agent*, no action is denominated virtuous,

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ous that is not *voluntary*, and that does not proceed from some *good motive*, as a regard to the will of God, the good of others, or the dictates of conscience. If, therefore, the Divine Being be influenced by a disinterested regard to the happiness of his creatures, and adopt such measures as are best calculated to secure that great and glorious end, this end will certainly sanctify the means that are really necessary to accomplish it, with respect to him, who chooses those means only with a view to that end, and who cannot be mistaken in his application of them. The reason why it is wrong in man, a finite creature, to *do any evil that good may come of it*, is that, our understandings being limited, the good that we project may not come of it, and therefore it is best that we, and all finite creatures, should govern our conduct by certain *inviolable rules*, whatever advantage may seem to us to be derived from occasional deviations from them.

Upon the whole, *natural good* is to be considered as the object and end, and virtue as being at the same time a *means* to that

that end, and likewise a *part* of it. It is, therefore, well observed by a writer who calls himself *Search* (see his *Light of Nature*, vol. v. p. 238) “moral evil were
 “no evil if there was no natural evil,
 “Because how could I do wrong, if no
 “hurt or damage could ensue therefrom
 “to any body? And it is no greater than
 “the mischief whereof it may be produc-
 “tive. Therefore, it is natural evil that
 “creates the difficulty, and the quality of
 “this evil is the same from whatever
 “causes arising.”

Though Mr. Edwards has many valuable remarks on this subject, and upon the whole has satisfactorily answered the objection to the doctrine of necessity which arises from the consideration of *God being the author of sin*, yet, in treating of it, he has made one observation which, I think, is not well founded, and which seems to shew that he was not willing to encounter the difficulty in its greatest strength.

He says (*Inquiry*, p. 363) “There is a
 “great difference between God’s being the
 “ordain-

“ordainer of the certain existence of sin,
 “by *not hindering* it under certain circum-
 “stances, and his being the *proper actor*,
 “or *author of it*, by a *positive agency* or ef-
 “ficiency. Sin,” says he, again, “is not the
 “fruit of any positive agency, or influence
 “of the Most High, but on the contrary
 “arises from his withholding his action and
 “energy”. He also says that, “though the
 “absence of the sun is the cause of darkness,
 “it would be improper to call the sun the
 “*source of darkness*, as it is of *light*.”

But if there be any foundation for the doctrine of necessity, *i. e.* if all events arise from preceding situations, and the *original situations* of all things, together with the *laws* by which all changes of situation take place, were fixed by the Divine Being, there can be no difference whatever with respect to his *causation* of one thing more than another. And even whatever takes place in consequence of his withholding his special and extraordinary influence, is as much agreeable to his *will*, as what comes

comes to pass in consequence of the general laws of nature.

It may, however, justly be said, and this is the proper answer to the difficulty, that the Divine Being may adopt some things which he would not have chosen *on their own account*, but for the sake of other things with which they were necessarily connected. And if he prefers that scheme in which there is the greatest prevalence of virtue and happiness, we have all the evidence that can be given of his being infinitely holy and benevolent, notwithstanding the mixture of vice and misery there may be in it. For supposing such a necessary connection of things good and evil, the most wise, holy, and good being, would not have made any other choice; nor do I see that it is possible to vindicate the *moral attributes*, or the *benevolence* of God, of which they are only *modifications*, upon any other supposition than that of the necessary connection, in the nature of things, between good and evil both natural and moral. And this necessary connection is very manifest in a variety of instances.

Accord-

According to the most fundamental laws of nature, and indeed the very *nature of things*, great virtues in some could not be generated, or exist, but in conjunction with great vices in others; for it is this opposition that not only exhibits them to advantage, but even, properly speaking, *creates* them. Where could there be clemency, fortitude, elevation of soul and deep resignation to the will of God, which form the most glorious and excellent of characters, but in struggling with difficulties that arise from injustice, ingratitude, and *vice*, of all other kinds, as well as from *outward adversity* and distress; so that even the supposition of there being no *general laws of nature* (which would, probably, be the greatest of all evils) but of God doing every thing *singly*, and in a manner independent of every thing else, would not be of any advantage in this case.

If any person, notwithstanding this representation, should be alarmed at the idea of God's being the proper cause of all evil, natural and moral, he should consider that, upon any scheme that admits of the divine
presci-

prescience, the same consequences follow. For still God is supposed to foresee, and *permit*, what it was in his power to have prevented, which is the very same thing as *willing* and directly *causing* it. If I certainly know that my child, if left to his liberty, will fall into a river, and be drowned, and I do not restrain him, I certainly *mean* that he should be drowned; and my conduct cannot admit of any other construction. Upon all schemes, therefore, that admit of the divine *prescience*, and consequently the *permission* of evil, natural and moral, the supposition of God's virtually *willing* and *causing* it is unavoidable, so that upon any scheme, the origin and existence of evil can only be accounted for on the supposition of its being ultimately *subservient to good*, which is a more immediate consequence of the system of necessity, than of any other.

The doctrine of necessity certainly enforces the belief of the greatest possible good with respect to the whole system, admitting the goodness of God in general, and cannot well be reconciled with the everlasting misery

fery of any. We are, therefore, naturally led, by the principles of it, to consider all future evils in the same light as the present, i. e. as corrective and salutary, terminating in good, which is also sufficiently agreeable to the language of the scriptures, with respect to all punishment, present or future. The necessarian, therefore, though he *may* admit the annihilation of the wicked, yet since they are to have the benefit of the *general resurrection*, together with the righteous, and we have no account of any death afterwards, but are assured on the contrary, that all will be equally immortal, he will lean strongly to the belief of the everlasting ultimate happiness of all; and this is an idea most sublime and glorious, and which cannot but have the happiest effect upon the mind at present.

On this subject I shall not enlarge, but content myself with quoting the first paragraph of the conclusion of Dr. Hartley's *Observations on Man*, in which will be seen what an impression this idea made upon his mind. If it be perused with attention, and without prejudice, it must, I think,
prepos-

prepossesses the reader in favour both of the *system*, and of the *man*.

“I have now gone through with my Ob-
 “servations on the frame, duty, and expec-
 “tations of man, finishing them with the
 “doctrine of ultimate, unlimited, *hap-*
 “*piness to all*. This doctrine, if it be true,
 “ought at once to dispel all gloominess;
 “anxiety, and sorrow, from our hearts, and
 “raise them to the highest pitch of love,
 “adoration, and gratitude, towards God,
 “our most bountiful creator, and merciful
 “father, and the inexhaustible source of all
 “happiness and perfection. Here self-
 “interest, benevolence, and piety, all
 “concur to move and exalt our affections.
 “How happy in himself, how benevolent
 “to others, and how thankful to God;
 “ought that man to be, who believes both
 “himself and others born to an infinite ex-
 “pectation. Since God has bid us rejoice;
 “what can make us sorrowful? Since he
 “has created us for happiness, what mi-
 “sery can we fear? If we be really intend-
 “ed for ultimate unlimited happiness, it
 “is no matter to a truly-resigned person;
 “*when,*

“ *when, or where, or how.* Nay, could
 “ any of us fully conceive, and be duly in-
 “ fluenced by, this glorious expectation,
 “ this infinite balance in our favour, it
 “ would be sufficient to deprive all present
 “ evils of their sting and bitterness. It
 “ would be a sufficient answer to the
 “ *ποθεν το κακον*, to all our difficulties and
 “ anxieties, from the folly, vice, and mi-
 “ sery, which we experience in ourselves,
 “ and see in others, that they will all end
 “ in unbounded knowledge, virtue and
 “ happiness; and that the progress of eve-
 “ ry individual, in his passage through an
 “ eternal life, is from imperfect to perfect,
 “ particular to general, less to greater, fi-
 “ nite to infinite, and from the creature to
 “ the Creator.”

SECTION XI.

*How far the Scriptures are favourable to
the Doctrine of Necessity.*

SUCH is the connection between the
 principle of *devotion* and the doctrine
 K of

of *necessity*, that with which soever of them a man begins, he is unavoidably led, in some degree, towards the other, whether he be distinctly aware of it or not.

The man who believes that the government of the world is in the hands of God, and that this God has great and gracious designs in every thing that he does, cannot believe that any thing happens unknown to him, or unforeseen by him, or that he will permit any thing to come to pass that will not *in fact*, and *ultimately*, promote his own designs, and even more effectually than any thing else. This is so near to the doctrine of absolute *decrees*, and the express *appointment* of every thing that comes to pass, even with respect to the vices of men, that they are not easily distinguished. Consequently, a person who sees in a strong light the doctrine of divine providence, cannot avoid speaking like a necessarian on the subject, and considering God himself as having *done* what he *permits*, and *avails himself* of, in the good that results from it. And such, in fact, as no
man

man can deny, is the language of the sacred writers.

In the scriptures we not only meet with such language as this, *The wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain*, Pf. lxxvi. v. 10. (which is strongly expressive of the subserviency of the most malignant passions of the human heart to the divine purposes, and implies that nothing more of vice will be permitted than is of use to that end) but many particular events which were wholly brought about by the vices of men, are said to be expressly *appointed* by God; and even the very temper and disposition by which the agents were actuated are said to be inspired by God, for that very purpose. At the same time, however, it appears from the circumstances of the history that there was no proper *interposition* of the Divine Being in the case, no real *miracle*, but every thing took place according the common established course of nature; since what those wicked persons did may easily be accounted for on principles by which men are actuated every day; and they did nothing but what

such men would naturally do again, in the same circumstances.

In like manner, the good designs and actions of men are, in the scriptures, frequently ascribed to God, though there be no reason, from the circumstances of the facts, to suppose that there was any supernatural influence upon their minds, but that they acted as well-disposed persons would naturally do in their situations.

Also, the common operations of nature are described in such language, both in the Old and New Testament, as evidently shews that the writers considered all the laws of the system as if they were executed immediately by the author of them, and consequently that all events whatever are properly his own agency, just as if no second causes had intervened. A mind habitually pious looks beyond all second causes, to the first and proper cause of all things, and rests only there.

Good men, in the scriptures, frequently ascribe their own good works to God, as
the

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the proper author of them, *the giver of every good and every perfect gift*, and are the farthest in the world from having the least idea of their having any *merit*, or claim upon God, in consequence of it; which, upon the doctrine of philosophical free-will, they really have. But their language is utterly irreconcilable with this doctrine.

Lastly, both the present and the future destination of men is generally spoken of as fixed and ordained by God, as if he from the first intended, that whatever *is to be, should be*, with respect to happiness or misery, here or hereafter.

Not that I think the sacred writers were, strictly speaking, *necessarians*, for they were not *philosophers*; but their habitual devotion naturally led them to refer all things to God, without reflecting on the rigorous meaning of their language; and very probably, had they been interrogated on the subject, they would have appeared not to be apprized of the proper extent of the

such men would naturally do again, in the same circumstances.

In like manner, the good designs and actions of men are, in the scriptures, frequently ascribed to God, though there be no reason, from the circumstances of the facts, to suppose that there was any supernatural influence upon their minds, but that they acted as well-disposed persons would naturally do in their situations.

Also, the common operations of nature are described in such language, both in the Old and New Testament, as evidently shews that the writers considered all the laws of the system as if they were executed immediately by the author of them, and consequently that all events whatever are properly his own agency, just as if no second causes had intervened. A mind habitually pious looks beyond all second causes, to the first and proper cause of all things, and rests only there.

Good men, in the scriptures, frequently ascribe their own good works to God, as
the

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necessarian scheme, and would have answered in a manner unfavourable to it.

For the greater satisfaction of my reader I shall produce a few examples of each of the particulars I have mentioned, though in a different order; and I beg that he would give a deliberate attention to them, and then I cannot help thinking he will be disposed to view them in the light in which I have presented them.

That God was considered by the sacred writers as the author of the good dispositions, and good works of men, is evident from the following passages.

Deut xxx. 6. *And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.*

Jer. xxvi. 7. *And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, and they shall turn unto me with their whole heart.*

xxxii. 39.

xxxii. 39. *And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them. I will put my fear in their heart, and they shall not depart from me.*

Ezek. xi. 19. *And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you, and I will take the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.*
xxxvi. 26. *And I will put my spirit in you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*

It is said of Lydia (Acts xvi. 14) *whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to things that were spoken of Paul.*

With respect to the *reception of the gospel*, our Saviour says (John vi. 27. &c.) *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. No man can come to me except the Father, who has sent me, draw him; and again, No man can come unto me except it be given to him of my Father.*

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To the same purpose the apostle Paul says (1 Cor. iii. 6. &c.) *I have planted and Apollos watered, but God gave the increase; so that neither is he that planted any thing, neither he that watered, but God that gave the increase.* He also says (Phil. i. 6) *Being confident of this one thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.* ii. 12, 13. *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure.*

We find the same sentiment in Jude v. 24. *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the coming of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God, and our Saviour, be glory and majesty, &c.*

All prayers for good dispositions go upon the same principles, and these are frequent in the scriptures. Thus Solomon, at the solemn dedication of the temple, prays in the following manner, (1 Chron. xxix. 18) *O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, keep this for ever in the imagination*

of the thoughts of the hearts of thy people, and prepare their hearts unto thee.

David says (Ps. li. 10) *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.*

The apostle Paul prays to the same purpose (Rom. xv. 13) *Now the God of hope fill you with all hope and joy in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. Ephes. iii. 16. That he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might, by his spirit, in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, &c. 1 Thess. v. 23. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. Heb. xiii. 20. Now the God of all peace make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ.*

In the same manner prays the apostle Peter (1 Peter v. 10) *But the God of all grace—make you perfect, establish, strengthen and settle you.*

Such

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Such, also, is the usual style of prayer to this day, as the following expressions from the book of Common Prayer, "O God
" from whom all holy desires, all good
" counsels, and all just works do proceed."
And again "Almighty and ever-living
" God, who makest us both to will and to
" do those things that be acceptable to thy
" divine majesty."

That the evil actions of men, also, which necessarily imply bad dispositions, do, in the language of scripture, take place in consequence of the particular appointment of God, and especially such actions as terminate in great good, or just punishment, which is the same thing, the following passages abundantly prove. The selling of Joseph into Egypt was certainly a most base action of his brethren; but observe how this pious man speaks of it, addressing himself to his brethren afterwards (Gen. xlv. 5) *Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life: And again (v. 8) It was not you that sent me hither, but God.*

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The manner in which God is said to have hardened the heart of Pharaoh, for which, however, he was justly punished is very express (Exod. vi. 21) *I will harden his heart that he shall not let the people go;* and the expression is frequently repeated in the course of the history.

It is also said of the Canaanites (Jof. xi. 20) *It was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel to battle, that he might destroy them utterly.*

When the men of Shechem, who had unjustly taken the part of Abimelech, afterwards quarrelled with him, it is said (Judges ix. 23) *And God sent an evil spirit betwixt Abimelech and the men of Shechem, and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech.*

It is said of the sons of Eli (1 Sam. ii. 25) that *they hearkened not to the voice of their father because the Lord would slay them.*

When

When Ahab for his wickedness and obstinacy was justly devoted to destruction, it is said (2 Chron. xviii) that *God sent a lying spirit into the mouths of his prophets, in order to deceive him.*

Our Saviour seems to have considered both the rejection of the gospel by those who boasted of their wisdom, and the reception of it by the more despised part of mankind, as being the consequence of the express appointment of God. Matt. xi. 25. *At that time Jesus answered, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.*

Speaking, upon another occasion, concerning the unbelief of the Jews, he says (John xii. 39) *Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias hath said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and I should heal them.*

Moses,

Moses, also, speaking of the obstinacy of the Jews, says (Deut. xxix. 4) *Yet the Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.* Isaiah, also, in his address to God, says (Is. lxiii. 17) *O Lord why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?*

With respect to the apostacy of the latter times the apostle Paul says (2 Theff. ii. 11) *And for this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

We know of no act of more atrocious wickedness, or one for which a more just and severe punishment was inflicted, than the death of Christ, and yet it is always spoken of as most expressly *decreed*, and *appointed by God*; and, as was observed before, it entered, in a most remarkable manner, into the plan of divine providence. It is thus spoken of in the book of Acts ii. 23. *Him, being delivered by the determined council and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken,*

taken, and with wicked hands have crucified and slain; and again (iv. 27) Of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together; for to do whatsoever thy hand, and thy counsel, determined before to be done.

That God is considered as the sovereign dispenser both of gospel privileges here, and future happiness hereafter, appears in such passages as 2 Thess. ii. 13. *God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth.*

The language of St. Paul in the ninth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, relates at the same time to external privileges, moral virtue, and future happiness, as having a very near connection with one another. ver. 15, &c. *He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*

For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory? Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.

In the following passage, also, the same apostle speaks of the whole process, from being first called to the knowledge of God, to a state of future glory, as equally the
work

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work of God. Rom. viii. 29. *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*

That such things as come to pass in the common course of providence were considered by the pious writers of the scriptures as more immediately administered by himself, overlooking second causes, and regarding only the first and proper cause of all things, the following passages, among many others, abundantly testify.

With respect to the general constitution of nature, the Psalmist says (Ps. lxxv. 9) *Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it: thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou*

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thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blestest the springing thereof. Ps. civ. 27. These all wait upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good: thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust: thou sendest forth t' y spirit, they are created: thou renewest the face of the earth.

What we call the *common events*, and *accidents* of life, are all in the language of scripture, the express appointment of God. Exod. xxi. 13. *If a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand.* Ps. xvi. 23. *The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.*

Matt. x. 29. *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and not one of them shall fall to the ground without your heavenly father.*

1 Sam. ii. 6, 7. *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up: he raiseth up the poor out*

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*of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from
the dunghill.*

Dan. ii. 20. *He changes times and seasons: he removeth kings and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding.*

Amos iv. 7. *I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city. I have smitten you with blasting, and mildew. I have sent among you the pestilence. Your young men have I slain with the sword.*

The *thoughts, and dispositions of men, are also represented as being under the secret direction of God, Prov. xxi. 1. The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water. He turneth it whithersoever he will.*

Ambitious and wicked men are often spoken of as the instruments of divine providence. Ps. xvii. 13. *Arise, O Lord, deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword.*

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The subserviency of the proud king of Assyria to the designs of divine providence, is described by the prophet Isaiah in a manner that is peculiarly emphatical and sublime. Isa. x. 5. *O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is my indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so, but it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few. For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man. Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith, or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against him that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood, &c.*

Of another conqueror, also, God says,
 Jer. li. 20. *Thou art my battle axe, and
 weapons of war : for with thee will I break
 in pieces the nations, and with thee will I
 destroy kingdoms. And with thee will I break
 in pieces the horse and his rider, &c.*

From the whole of this subject, and
 these passages compared with others, I do
 not, as I observed before, infer that the sa-
 cred writers were, philosophically speaking,
necessarians. But they were such good and
 pious men, set God so much before them,
 and had such high and just ideas of his
 uncontrollable power and providence, that
 they overlooked all second causes, and had
 respect to God only, as the proper and ul-
 timate cause of all.

SECTION

SECTION XII.

The Calvinistic doctrine of PREDESTINATION, compared with the Philosophical doctrine of NECESSITY.

THE philosophical doctrine of *Necessity* so much resembles the Calvinistic doctrine of *Predestination*, in some views of it, that it may be worth while to point out distinctly in what they agree, and in what they differ. I shall, therefore, do it, and with as much fairness as I possibly can,

The scheme of philosophical necessity has been shewn to imply a chain of *causes and effects*, established by infinite wisdom, and terminating in the greatest good of the whole universe: evils of all kinds, natural and moral, being admitted, as far as they contribute to that end, or may be, in the nature of things, inseparable from it. No necessarian, however, supposes that any of the human race will suffer eternally; but

that future punishments will answer the same purpose as temporal ones are found to do, all of which tend to good, and are evidently admitted for that purpose; so that God, the author of all, is as much to be adored and loved for what we *suffer* as for what we *enjoy*, his *intention* being equally kind in both, since both are equally parts, and equally necessary parts, of the same plan. Upon the doctrine of necessity, also, the most indifferent actions of men are equally necessary with the most important; since every volition, like any other *effect*, must have an adequate *cause*, depending upon the previous state of the mind, and the influence to which it is exposed.

On the other hand, the consistent, the moderate, or sublapsarian Calvinist, supposes that God created the first man absolutely free to sin, or not to sin, capable of sinless obedience to all the commands of God; but that, without being predestinated to it, he fell from this state of innocence, by eating the forbidden fruit; and from that
time

time became, and all his posterity with him (he being their federal head) liable to the eternal wrath of God, and that their whole natures were at the same time so vitiated, that they are naturally incapable of thinking a good thought, or doing a good action.

The whole race of mankind being thus liable to everlasting damnation, God was pleased, for *his own glory*, and sovereign good will, and without any reason of *preference*, to reserve a small number in comparison with the rest of mankind, and predestinate them to everlasting happiness, on condition that his son, the second person in the trinity, in power, glory, and all other respects, equal to himself, becoming man, submitting in their stead to death, and bearing that infinite punishment of divine wrath, which every sin against an infinite Being had deserved, and which infinite justice could not remit; while all the rest of the corrupted mass of mankind, not being redeemed by the death of Christ, remained necessarily doomed to sin here, and misery for ever hereafter.

The elect being, like other persons, born in *original sin*, have their natures equally depraved, and of course are as incapable of all good thoughts, or good works, as the reprobate, till God, by a *miraculous interposition*, produces a change in their disposition, and, by his immediate agency on their minds, enables them to think and act so as to please him. But after this miraculous change, or *new birth*, though an elected person may sin, and always will do so when he is *left to himself*, he will not finally fall away and perish; but God will, some time before his death, renew him again by repentance, and he shall certainly be happy for ever. Whereas the reprobate (the grace of repentance, and of the new birth, not being vouchsafed to them) are under a necessity of sinning, and of sinning only. Though their actions should, to all appearance, be ever so praise-worthy in the sight of men, they are, in fact, of *the nature of sin*, and only sure to aggravate their certain and final condemnation. Moreover, though many of them die in infancy, before they were capable of committing *actual sin*, they are nevertheless
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liable to the eternal wrath of God on account of the sin of their forefather, and federal head.

Now, in comparing these two schemes, I can see no sort of resemblance, except that the future happiness or misery of all men are certainly foreknown, and appointed by God. In all other respects they are most essentially different; and even where they agree in the *end*, the difference in the *manner* by which that end is accomplished is so very great, that the *influence* of the two systems on the minds of those that adopt and act upon them is the reverse of one another, exceedingly favourable to virtue in the necessarian, and as unfavourable to it in the Calvinist.

For the essential difference between the two schemes is this: the necessarian believes that his own dispositions and actions are the necessary and sole means of his present and future happiness; so that, in the most proper sense of the words, it depends intirely upon *himself* whether he be virtuous or vicious, happy or miserable,
just

just as much as it depends upon the farmer himself sowing his fields and weeding them, whether he will have a good crop; except that, in favour of the doctrine of necessity, where *morals* are concerned, his endeavours in the former case are much more certain in their effect than in the latter; which view of things cannot but operate to make him exert himself to the utmost, in proportion to his regard for his own happiness; his success being certain in proportion to his exertion of himself. With this exertion he cannot miscarry, but without it he must, unless the laws of nature should change, be inevitably miserable. As far as any system of faith can induce men to cultivate virtuous principles and habits, this doctrine of necessity must do it.

On the other hand, I do not see what motive a Calvinist can have to give any attention to his moral conduct. So long as he is unregenerate, all his thoughts, words and actions are necessary sinful, and in the act of *regeneration* he is altogether passive. On this account the most consistent Calvinists never address any exhortations

tations to sinners, considering them as *dead in trespasses and sins*, and therefore that there would be as much sense and propriety in speaking to the dead as to them. On the other hand, if a man be in the happy number of the *elect*, he is sure that God will, some time or other, and at the most proper time (for which the last moment of his life is not too late) work upon him his miraculous work of *saving and sanctifying grace*. Though he should be ever so wicked immediately before this divine and *effectual calling*, it makes nothing against him. Nay, some think that, this being a more signal display of the wonders of divine grace, it is rather the more probable that God will take this opportunity to display it. If any system of speculative principles can operate as an axe at the root of all virtue and goodness, it is this.

The necessarian, also, believes nothing of the posterity of Adam sinning in him, and of their being liable to the wrath of God on that account, or of the necessity of an infinite being making atonement for them, by suffering in their stead, and thus
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making the Deity propitious to them. He believes nothing of all the actions of any men being necessarily sinful; but, on the contrary, thinks that the very worst of men are capable of benevolent and worthy intentions in many things that they do; and likewise, that very good men are capable of falling from virtue, and consequently of sinking into final perdition. The opinions of the Calvinist on these heads he considers as equally absurd and dangerous. Upon the principles of the necessarian also, all *late repentance*, and especially after long and confirmed habits of vice, are altogether and necessarily ineffectual; there not being sufficient time left to produce a *change of disposition* and character, which can only be done by a change of conduct, and of proportionably long continuance.

Besides, before Mr. Edwards, no Calvinist, I think I may venture to say, considered every particular volition and action of men as determined by preceding motives. The Calvinists, together with the rest of mankind, who speculated at all upon
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the subject, maintained what was called the doctrine of *indifference* with respect to particular actions; and though they considered all who were unregenerate as incapable of thinking a good thought, and as under a necessity of continually committing sin, they would not say that every particular sinful action was necessary, exclusive of every other sinful action. Also, except the supralapsarians, no Calvinists ever considered Adam *before his fall* as being under any necessity of sinning; so that the doctrine of the proper *mechanism of the human mind*, from which no volition is exempt, was certainly unknown to them. Also their belief of a divine interposition both in the work of regeneration, and upon almost every occasion with respect to the elect afterwards, is such, that, according to them, the proper laws of nature are perpetually violated; so that the most perfect knowledge of them could be of little use for regulating our expectations, with regard to any event in which the affections of the human mind are concerned. In this the creed of the necessarian is the very reverse of that of the Calvinist.

Farther,

Farther, the Calvinistic system intirely excludes the *popular notion* of free will, viz. the liberty, or power, of doing what we please, virtuous or vicious, as belonging to every person, in every situation; which is perfectly consistent with the doctrine of philosophical necessity, and indeed results from it. And in this respect it is that the language of scripture cannot be reconciled with the tenets of Calvinism. In the scriptures all sinners are most earnestly exhorted to forsake their sins, and return to their duty; and all, without exception, have the fullest assurances given to them of pardon and favour upon their return. *Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, why will ye die, O house of Israel?* Ezek. xxxiii. 11, is the uniform tenor of the scripture calls to repentance; and the Divine Being is represented as declaring, in the most solemn manner, ib. v. 11, that *he hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but had rather that he would turn from his way and live.*

Such expostulations as these have the greatest propriety upon the scheme of necessity,

cessity, which supposes a necessary and mechanical influence of motives upon the human mind; but can have no propriety at all with respect to men who are so far *dead in sin*, as to be incapable of being excited to virtue by any motive whatever. And it is only tantalizing men to propose to them motives that cannot possibly influence them, and when nothing but a divine power, operating miraculously, and consequently in a manner *independent of all natural means*, is able to effect that very change, which they are exhorted to make in themselves.

That I do not misrepresent the proper Calvinistic principles I am very confident. They are held, indeed, with considerable variation, but what I have described is what is most generally meant by Calvinism, and is the most consistent, and at the same time the most favourable scheme of the kind; and is that to which I was formerly as much attached myself, as any person can be now.

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The doctrine of philosophical necessity is, in reality, a modern thing, not older, I believe, than Mr. Hobbes. Of the Calvinists, I believe Mr. Jonathan Edwards to be the first. Others have followed his steps, especially Mr. Toplady. But the inconsistency of his scheme with what is properly Calvinism, appears by his dropping several of the essential parts of that system, and his silence with respect to others. And when the doctrine of necessity shall be thoroughly understood, and well considered by Calvinists, it will be found to militate against almost all their peculiar tenets. Mr. Toplady believes that all children dying in infancy are happy. See his *Scheme of Necessity asserted*, p. 121: and that much the greater part of mankind are elected, p. 120, that undoubtedly there are *elect Mahometans*, and *elect Pagans*, and he seems to think the torments of hell will not be eternal. But this is departing very widely indeed from the proper doctrines of Calvinism; and more attention to the principles of the necessarian scheme cannot fail to draw him, and all philosophizing Calvinists, farther and farther from

from that system: nor will they be able to rest any where, but in what I call the simple and unadulterated doctrine of revelation, and which they brand with the obnoxious name of *Socinianism*, in which, after being what they now are, I joyfully and thankfully acquiesce, reflecting with a kind of horror on what I was, and what I felt, when I endeavoured to think and act, as I most conscientiously did, upon those principles.

I cannot, however, conclude this section without acknowledging (and I do it with particular satisfaction) that though I consider the proper Calvinistic system as a most *gloomy* one, and peculiarly unfavourable to virtue, it is only so when *consistently pursued*, and when every part of it equally impresses the mind. But this is never, in fact, the case with any system. If there be in our minds a *prevalence of good principles* and good dispositions, we naturally turn our eyes from every thing in our respective systems that, even by a just construction, is unfavourable to virtue and goodness, and we reflect with pleasure, and

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act

act upon, those parts of them only that have a good tendency. Now the doctrine of a general and a most particular providence is so leading a feature in every scheme of predestination, it brings God so much into every thing, and the ideas of justice and goodness are so inseparable from the idea of the Divine Being, that, in spite of every thing else in the system, an habitual and animated devotion will be the result, and from this principle no evil is to be dreaded.

But where a disposition to vice has pre-occupied the mind, I am very well satisfied, and but too many facts might be alledged in proof of it, that the doctrines of Calvinism have been actually fatal to the *remains of virtue*, and have driven men into the most desperate and abandoned course of wickedness; whereas the doctrine of necessity, properly understood, cannot possibly have any such effect, but the contrary.

In fact, if, from a good education, or any other source, the general bias of the
mind

PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY. 163

mind be in favour of virtue, a man may be safely trusted with any speculative principles. But if the bias be in favour of vice, it is of great importance that the speculative principles be right and sound, that, when viewed in every just light, they may operate as a motive for reforming the life and manners. The connection between virtue and happiness, and between vice and misery, is upon no principles whatever so certain and demonstrable as on those of philosophical necessity.

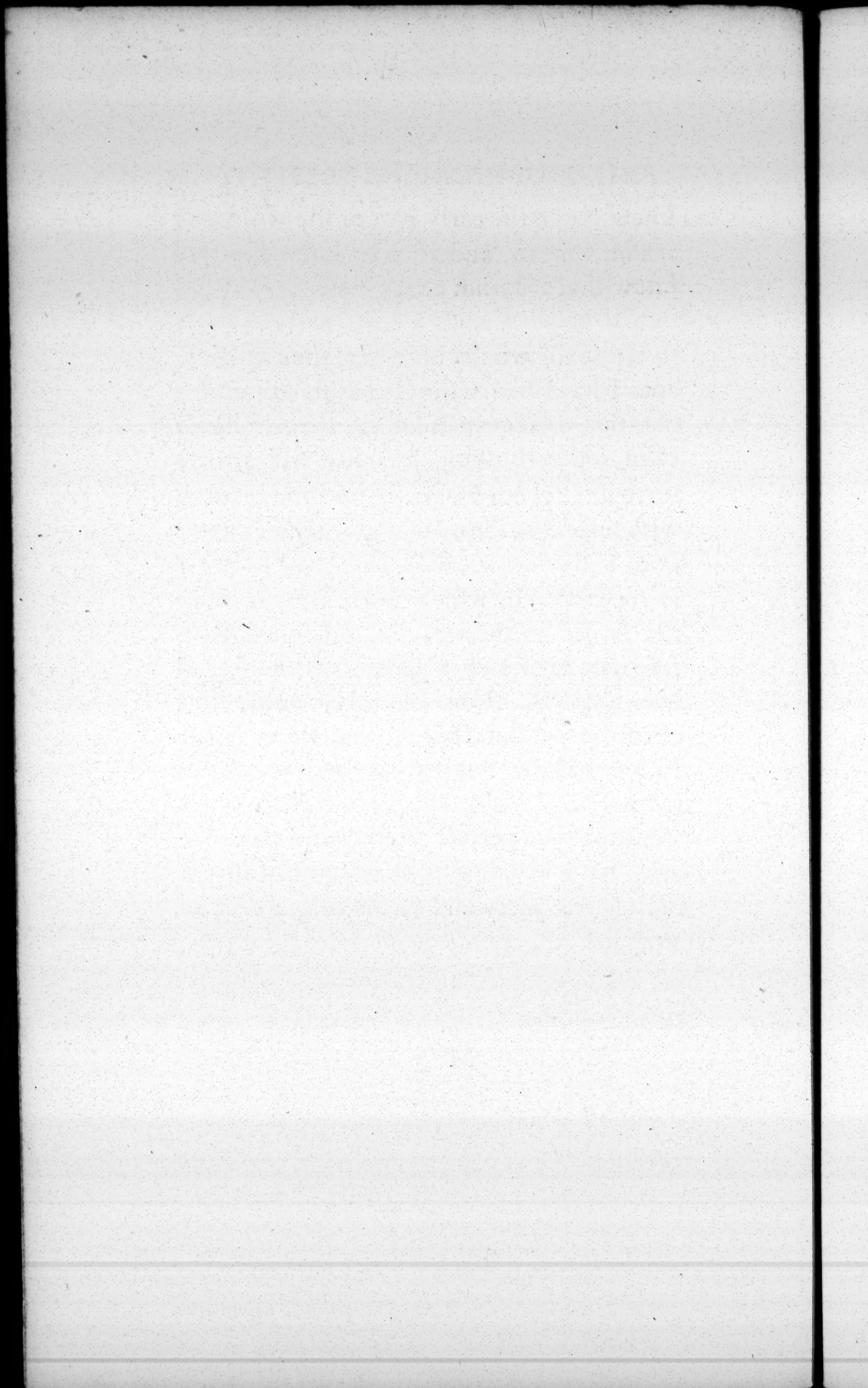
Whether it be owing to my Calvinistical education, or my considering the principles of Calvinism as generally favourable to that leading virtue *devotion*, or to their being something akin to the doctrine of necessity, I cannot but acknowledge that, notwithstanding what I have occasionally written against that system, and which I am far from wishing to retract, I feel myself disposed to look upon Calvinists with a kind of *respect*, and could never join in the contempt and insult with which I have often heard them treated in conversation. From my long and intimate acquaintance with

164 ILLUSTRATIONS OF
the very *straitest* of that *sect*, I have seen
but too much reason to believe that though
there is often among them great maligni-
ty of heart concealed under all the exter-
nal forms of devotion, I have been, and
am still acquainted with many whose hearts
and lives, I believe, are, in all respects,
truly christian, and whose christian tempers
are really promoted by *their own views* of
their system.

It is true that the treatment I have met
with from Calvinists *as such* must have had
a tendency to exasperate me against them;
but every thing of this kind has been ba-
lanced by the kindness I have met with
from others of them. And I shall ever re-
flect with gratitude, that the person to
whom, in this world, I have been under
the greatest obligation, was at the same
time a strict Calvinist, and in all respects as
perfect a human character as I have yet
been acquainted with. I had the fairest
opportunity of observing and studying it,
and I now frequently reflect upon it, with
satisfaction and improvement. All who
knew

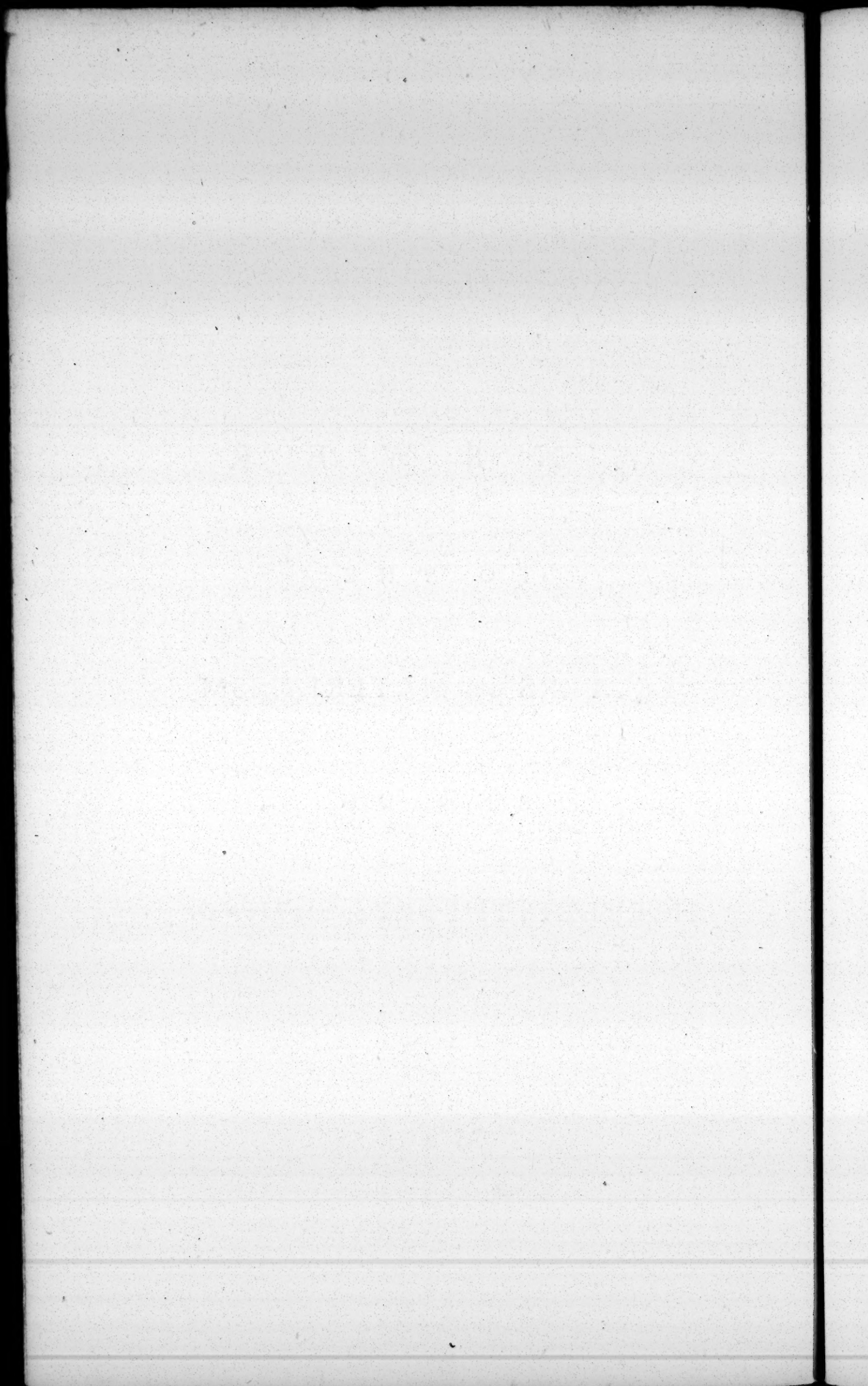
knew me in the early part of life will know whom I mean, and all who knew her will know that I do not exaggerate.

Upon the whole, however, the acquaintance I have had with Calvinists convinces me, that their principles, in the minds of calm, sober-thinking persons, will always leave some room for doubt and uncertainty with respect to the evidence of their conversion, and what is called the *work of grace in the heart*, in which much must necessarily be left to the imagination, and therefore that at times a gloom will be spread over the soul. Consequently, unless this effect be counteracted by something either in the natural temper, or opinions, of a more liberal cast, their principles do not admit of that perfect *serenity* and *cheerfulness*, with which it is to be wished that a life of real piety and virtue might ever be attended.



A N
A N S W E R
T O T H E
LETTERS ON MATERIALISM
A N D O N
HARTLEY'S THEORY OF THE MIND.

M 4



To the Author of the LETTERS ON
MATERIALISM *and on* HARTLEY'S
THEORY OF THE MIND.

S I R,

YOU have challenged me to the discussion of a variety of topics, some of which are the most difficult, sublime, and important of any that lie within the reach of the human understanding; and where the greatest men have expressed the greatest diffidence, you have written with the greatest possible confidence. Also, if your language be not ironical, you consider your antagonist as the most formidable combatant you could have to contend with. You have, on various occasions, expressed the highest opinion of my learning, and abilities, and the strongest sense of my merit and services in the cause of literature,
and

and where knowledge of the most valuable kind was concerned. To pass over what you say in general of my “ eminent abilities and indefatigable labours in every learned and valuable pursuit,” and also with respect to natural philosophy in particular, than which nothing finer can be said of any man, you are more particularly lavish of your encomiums upon me on the subject of my controversy with the Scotch defenders of the doctrine of *Instinctive Principles of Truth*, in which I had occasion to introduce several of the opinions which have given you so much offence, and which you call upon me to defend.

As a prudent man, you certainly would not have provoked a combat in the very high tone in which you have done this, without the greatest certainty of success. You have, no doubt, therefore, in your own mind, *counted the cost* of the enterprise you have undertaken, and have already anticipated my confusion, and your complete triumph.

Now

Now it happens that so very great a philosopher, and so acute a metaphysician as you represent me to be, and who has had the subjects on which you so boldly challenge me in contemplation from the time that I was capable of considering them at all, to the present time of my life, which is the memorable year *forty-five*, a period in which, at a medium, the human faculties may be deemed to have arrived to their very *ακμῇ*, a period in which we expect a due mixture of imagination and judgment, in which the ardour of youth is not extinguished, but improved into a manly vigour: it happens, I say, that, in these very advantageous circumstances, in which you and nature have placed me, after having had your Letters in my hands about twelve months, and having in that time exercised my faculties in a close attention to metaphysical subjects, as, I hope, my *Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit*, and the preceding treatise on *Philosophical Necessity* will prove, I do now, with great seriousness, aver, that, in my opinion, hardly any of the works of the three Scotch writers, which you and I hold so cheap, is weaker

weaker in point of argument than yours. I barely except that of Dr. Oswald, who is certainly one of the most dogmatical, and absurd of all writers.

Farther, though, judging by facts, there is but little reason to expect that any man who has given to the Public, his opinion on any subject of importance, will ever retract it, I think I perceive marks of so much candour and ingenuoufness in some parts of your Letters (though I own I perceive but few traces of those qualities in other places) that I do not absolutely despair of engaging you to *acknowledge* that you have fallen into several very important mistakes, at least that your virulent censures of myself, and my opinions, are abundantly too severe. For this purpose I shall lay before you a few plain considerations, to which I beg, in the first place, a very deliberate attention, and then an explicit answer. As I have already discussed sufficiently, as I think, at large, the principal points in debate between us, in the preceding treatises, I shall, in this letter, only briefly refer to them.

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You will think it extraordinary that the first point I beg you would attend to, and be explicit upon, is, whether you do really hold any opinion different from mine, at least whether you do not acknowledge principles which necessarily, and not remotely, but *immediately*, draw after them the belief of all that I have contended for? and yet I am pretty confident that I can make this out to the satisfaction of others, and even to your own, with respect to the two great articles on which you arraign me, viz. the doctrines of *necessity* and of *materialism*.

Of the Doctrine of NECESSITY.

You expressly allow, a *constant influence of motives to determine the will*. The *moral*, you say (p. 171) *is as certain as is the physical cause*; and you will not deny (for no man can do it) that the immediate consequence of this position is, that the Divine Being, who established this constant dependance of human volitions upon preceding motives, and the state of mind, could not intend that any volition, or choice, should

should have been otherwise than it has been, is, or is to be. You are, therefore, as much a necessarian as myself; and all your copious declamation upon this topic, concerning the great mischief done to morals and society, &c. &c. &c. affects yourself as much as it does me.

If the mind be, in fact, *constantly* determined by motives, I desire you would say, candidly, why you object to the mere term *necessity*, by which nothing is ever meant but the *cause of constancy*. As I have observed before, it is only because I see a stone fall to the ground *constantly*, that I infer it does so *necessarily*, or *according to some fixed law of nature*; and please to say whether you think it could happen, that the mind could be constantly determined by motives, if there be not a fixed law of nature, from which that constant determination results. Indeed, Sir, this is so very plain, that you must either avow yourself a necessarian, dreadfully as the term may sound in your ears, or adopt some quite new ground of defence, some new principles of human liberty, that is, some *other kind*

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of

PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY. 175

of *liberty* than what you have yet contended for.

As far as the consequences of the *doctrine of necessity* affect the Deity, you, who believe the divine prescience, make no scruple to admit them. You say (p. 188) “Why a benevolent Creator gave free will to man, which he foresaw would be to his unhappiness and ruin, you can assign no other reason, than that such a being entered into his general plan of existence.”

You admit, therefore, that all the actual consequences of free will, the unhappiness and ruin of a great proportion of mankind, entered into the general plan of providence, which is as much as saying that the plan required them, and could not proceed so well without them. And, if so, what objection can you have to the Divine Being having absolutely *decreed* them? If his plan absolutely required these evils, it is plain that, at any rate, he must introduce them. All the difference that there can possibly be between us is, that, according to you, the divine plan

plan required *free will*, though necessarily attended with the evils you mention, and I say that his plan required *general* and *ultimate happiness*, though necessarily attended with the same evils. According to us both, the evils were necessary, either to free will, or to general happiness.

Of MATERIALISM.

The next great argument between us is, the uniform composition, and materiality, of the whole man. But, though you express the greatest abhorrence of this sentiment, I call upon you to shew that you yourself do not virtually admit it. You expressly declare (p. 76) for the doctrine of a proper *physical influence* between the mind and the body, as *the only philosophical notion*, and you maintain that the two substances *mutually act and re-act upon each other*. Now this you explain on principles that most evidently set aside all distinction between matter and spirit, and make them to be as much of the same composition as I do myself. For you say that, “in order to to this mutual action, spirit
“ must

“ must be possessed of such inferior qualities, as are not unalliable with the more exalted species of matter.” Now the most exalted species of matter possible must have length, breadth, and thickness, and in the common opinion, *solidity*, or it would not be matter at all. And I call upon you to say whether those inferior qualities of spirit, by which it is capable of acting and of being acted upon by a substance that has no properties besides extension and solidity, must not be comprized under those of extension and solidity? I will venture to say that you cannot name any other quality that will answer your purpose. In fact, therefore, you maintain exactly what I do, viz. that a substance possessed of the properties of matter may have those of perception and thought likewise. You may use a different language, but our ideas are the very same. I appeal to your own more mature reflections on the subject. I also desire you to explain how spirit, as you say (p. 76) can *bear no relation to space*, and yet be possessed of some properties in common with those of matter.

N

Besides

Besides ascribing to spirit the properties of matter, to confound them more effectually, you farther ascribe to matter the peculiar properties of spirit, for you give it an *active power*, which all other immaterialists, and indeed all consistent immaterialists, say is incompatible with their idea of matter. I desire you would tell me, therefore, why, if one species of active power (for you are not explicit enough to say *what kind* of active power you mean) may be imparted to matter, *another*, or *any other* species of it may not? And what has the power of *thought* always been defined to be, but a particular species of active power?

These remarks, I will venture to say, are so very plain, that a much worse understanding than yours must be convinced of the justness of them, and a small degree of ingenuofness will produce an avowal of that conviction. These remarks also comprize all the great subjects on which we differ. As lesser matters not worth repeating here, I desire you would say what you have to advance in defence of your notion of *space*, on which I have remarked (p. 58) and
what

what you mean by saying it is an "ideal
 " phenomenon arising from the external
 " order of co-existing bodies." To me
 the expression is absolute jargon. Tell
 me also what you have to reply to my an-
 swer to your argument on the subject of
attention. p. 92.

I shall now advert to some other matters
 not discussed in either of the preceding
 treatises; and here also I have no doubt but
 that I shall make your mistakes and misre-
 presentations palpable even to yourself.

Of INSTINCTIVE PRINCIPLES.

What you say in order to prove that my
 own principles, or rather those of Dr.
 Hartley, are as unfriendly to the cause of
 truth as the doctrine of instinctive princi-
 ples, is so exceedingly trifling, and foreign
 to the purpose, that had I not seen it in the
 same book, I could not have persuaded
 myself that a person who joins me so very
 heartily as you do in my condemnation of
 that system, could possibly have written it.

You were "highly pleased," you say (p. 8) "to see a doctrine so triumphantly
"thrown down, from its usurped empire,
"which had, within a few years, gained an
"astonishing ascendancy over minds that
"should have been aware of its fallacy and
"erroneous principles;" and upon many
other occasions you express the strongest
approbation of my services to the cause of
truth on this account.

After this I might well be surprized to
find myself accused of maintaining principles
equally, or more unfavourable to the
doctrine concerning *truth*; but I own I
was still more surprized when I perceived
the foundation on which you advance this
extraordinary charge, and that the only
similarity you pretend to find between the
doctrine of instinctive principles of truth
and that of Dr. Hartley, is, that the assent to
propositions is in both equally *necessary* and
infallible, (p. 122). "In both systems,"
you say, (p. 123) "belief, as well as every
"mental affection, is a necessary and
"mechanical effect." The only difference,
you say (p. 123) "there is betwixt them
A. "seems

“ seems to be, that Dr. Hartley admits of
 “ no effect for which he does not assign, as
 “ the proper cause, some nervous vibra-
 “ tion, whilst the Doctors, without any suf-
 “ ficient reason, are labouring to establish
 “ others, which spring up immechanically,
 “ but however from some internal impulse.
 “ As far therefore as sensations, sensitive
 “ ideas, and their necessary Scotch ad-
 “ juncts go, the dissimilarity of opinion is
 “ but trifling: they are all the effects of
 “ constitution, or pre-established laws.”

You also say (p. 132) that, “ whenever
 “ any phenomenon of the human mind
 “ is explained by association, a cause is
 “ produced in its nature as impulsive and
 “ necessary, as can possibly be the most
 “ unerring instinct; with this only diffe-
 “ rence, that your system must be produc-
 “ tive of eternal discordance, and variety
 “ in opinions and feelings.”

Now surely, Sir, if you have read Mr.
 Locke, or indeed any other writer on the
 subject of the human mind, you must have
 found that, according to him, and all of

them, how free soever man is described as *willing*, his *judgment* is always supposed to be necessary, or mechanical. Indeed what is judgment, but the perception of the agreement or disagreement of ideas present to the mind? Now you expressly allow (indeed, with all the world) that the mind is passive in perception, that is, that all our perceptions must necessarily depend upon the objects present to us, and the state of the organs through which the ideas of them are transmitted. If I open my eyes, labouring under no disorder, and there be only a sheep before me, I cannot possibly see a horse; and if there be a young lamb accompanying the sheep, I necessarily *see*, and therefore *judge*, that the sheep is the bigger of the two. Now every other act of proper and simple judgment is as necessary and unavoidable, or, in your own language, as much the *effect of constitution*, and *established laws*, as this; and complex reasoning is all reducible to acts of simple judgment, as every logician knows. It is therefore impossible but that we must judge of all things as they appear to us, and it is this difference in the appearance of things
that

that is the cause of the differences in the judgments that different men form of the same things. These are principles that you *must* admit, and therefore all your violent declamation on the subject falls upon yourself, as well as on my devoted head.

Your censure of me on this subject is the more extraordinary, as, upon another occasion, you complain of my principles as not sufficiently securing the assent to truth, for you say (p. 156) “ If every perception
 “ be factitious, then, in spite of all internal
 “ reasons, and relations in the objects, our
 “ sentiments must widely deviate from, and
 “ the consequent actions be in direct opposition to, every thing that is right and
 “ virtuous. To obviate such deleterious
 “ effects it appears that an all-wise Being
 “ must have provided some principle, *innate to our very constitutions*, whereby the
 “ charms of truth and virtue might be felt,
 “ and their respective rights immoveably
 “ fixed, in opposition to error and vice.”

Now really, Sir, notwithstanding your professed abhorrence of the principle of

instinctive belief, I do not see of what other nature can be this principle of yours, which, you say, is *innate to our very constitutions*, and *by which the charms of truth and virtue may be felt, and their respective rights immoveably fixed, in opposition to error and vice*. I do not see how Messrs. Reid, Beattie, and Oswald could have expressed their own meaning more properly, or that you can account for the actual prevalence of error and vice in the world any better on your principles than they can on theirs. What then becomes of your vehement censures of me, as maintaining principles as subversive of truth as those of their reprobated system?

When, in favour of *your* instinctive principles of truth, you object to mine of *association*, that they must be productive of *infinite discordancy and variety of opinions and feelings* (p. 133) you mention a remarkable fact, which, as it appears to me, cannot be accounted for but upon the principle of the association of ideas. This will, indeed, fully account for the actual discordancy and variety of opinions and feelings in the world,

world, and in the most natural manner; and these, I say, are inconsistent with any doctrine of instinctive principles of truth, whether maintained by the Scotch Doctors, or by yourself.

Gross misconception of Dr. Hartley's meaning.

You sneer at me as a *rapid writer*, but rapid as my writings have been, they appear, *to my own review*, to have been sufficiently guarded. For, without excepting any thing *material*, or any thing more than the slowest writers in general may wish to correct and improve in their works, I do not know of any thing that I now wish to have written otherwise than it is. You, on the contrary, I presume, have written with great caution, and have given sufficient time to your publication; and when, with all due precautions, and advice of friends, you sent it abroad, I dare say you judged it to be superior to any opposition that it could meet with. But, notwithstanding this, I doubt not but, after the perusal of these remarks, if not before, you will

will see reason to wish you had written many things otherwise than you have done; and I do not mean with respect to the *manner* only, but the *matter* too. Some of the instances I have already mentioned will, I am persuaded, make you pause; but I shall proceed to mention a few more, for which no apology can be made, the blunders in point of reasoning being too gross for any palliation; and yet I do not profess myself to be master of any uncommon art of detecting sophistry. What ought to make you blush the more, they relate to two very heavy charges, one against Dr. Hartley, and the other against myself.

Dr. Hartley, with great ingenuousness and truth, had said, "However the necessary may, in theory, ascribe all to God,
" yet the associations of life beget the idea
" and opinion of *self*, refer actions to this
" self, and connect a variety of applauses
" and complacencies with those actions;
" and therefore that, as the asserters of
" philosophical free-will are not necessarily
" proved, so the asserters of the doctrine of mechanism are not necessarily
" hum-

“humble.” Now what can be inferred from this concussion, but that, though the doctrine of necessity *tends* to cure pride, and conceit, &c. the influences to which we are exposed in life counteract this tendency, in a great measure? This, I will venture to say, is all the *fair* inference that can be drawn from it.

Now what is the inference that *you* have drawn from it? I think you will hardly believe that you could have written any thing so very inconclusive, and injurious. For you say (p. 193) that “in this the
 “good Doctor, in a fit of holy zeal, was
 “determined, by one dash of his pen, to-
 “tally to annihilate all the boasted excel-
 “lence and superior advantages of mecha-
 “nism. Therefore” you say “has the
 “doctrine of mechanism, *from the Doctor’s*
 “*own confession*, a general tendency to
 “cause and support the vices of pride, va-
 “nity, self-conceit, and contempt of our
 “fellow-creatures. And I wish to God,”
 you add, “these were the only evils which
 “that doctrine is calculated to generate,
 “and immoveably to rivet in the human
 “breast—

“breast—Consequences so deleterious—*la*
“*tete me tourne.*”——

I do not, Sir, even in this, charge you, as you do me, with a *wilful perversion* of the author's meaning. But it is certainly a very unfortunate oversight, and of a very *calumniating and injurious tendency*, for which you will certainly ask the Doctor and the Public pardon. An exact parallel to this conduct of yours, would be that a physician, whose prescription did *not quite cure* a disorder, by reasons of the patient's way of life necessarily promoting it, being charged with *acknowledging*, that he administered medicines which tended to aggravate the disease. Dr. Hartley does not say that the *belief of the doctrine of mechanism*, but that the *associations of life* did the mischief, notwithstanding the good tendency of that doctrine.

Indeed, Sir, with respect to the unjust imputation of bad designs in your antagonists, you are, whether knowingly or unknowingly, a very dangerous writer, and such as the Public ought to be cautioned
against;

against ; for you have gone far beyond the bounds, I do not say, of *decorum* only, but of *truth*, and even of probability. You hint (p. 110) that Dr. Hartley “wrote, “and wrote so much about a thing, with “a design of puzzling his readers.” Now that you should have read Dr. Hartley’s work, as you say, *four times over*, and retain any such impression as this, astonishes me, but fully convinces me that it must have been with a prejudice which would effectually prevent your understanding him at all. It is, in several respects, evident, that, as yet, you are very little acquainted with his *theory* ; though you tell us (p. 10) that you can say “without vanity, you understand him thoroughly,” and I am now satisfied that you have been as little able to distinguish, or to catch, his *spirit*. Of one of my own paragraphs, you say, that it is *replete with falshood and wilful misrepresentation*. I hope you will blush when you reflect a moment upon things so very gross as these.

Gross

*Gross misrepresentation of what I have said
concerning a FUTURE LIFE, &c.*

But I proceed to your account of one of my arguments, of which you seem to have understood as little as of the above-mentioned of Dr. Hartley. I had said what I believe to be very true, that "the doctrine of "the immateriality of the soul has no "countenance in the scriptures," and you say, that "if so, the future existence of "man must be given up, even on the part "of revelation." But, upon the least reflection, you must see that, as a materialist, and a christian, I believe *the resurrection of the body*, that is of *the man*; and that upon this foundation only, in opposition to the opinion which rests it on the *natural immortality of the soul*, I rest my belief of a future life.

The paragraph in which you make this strange construction of my meaning, is in several respects, so curious, that I shall quote the whole of it (p. 221) and it will serve to give my reader a pretty just specimen

men of your manner of treating me, and the subjects of this controversy.

“ You declare that the doctrine of natural immortality has no countenance from the scriptures. I am not in the least disposed to pervert your meaning. I am sensible of the enormity of the crime: but I should be exceedingly glad to know whether these words have any meaning at all. For if you mean to say that the doctrine of natural immortality is not itself, as such, contained in the scriptures, you are, to be sure, in the right, because that doctrine, as the pure result of reason, most evidently is not a revealed truth. But if, as the words themselves express it, this doctrine has really no countenance from the scriptures, then is the future existence of man not only false in philosophy, as you insist, but likewise in its theological acceptance. What then becomes of that part of the scheme of revelation on which you rest all your hopes of immortality? But such slips of the pen (as has already been urged in justification of a similar over-

2

“ fight)

“ fight) are perhaps venial, and easily excuseable in the rapidity of composition, particularly of so hasty a composer as Dr. Priestley.”

Pray, Sir, who is it that has written *hastily*, and needs an apology in this case? I leave it to yourself to judge; and I hope you will be duly sensible, as you say you are, of the *enormity of the crime* of perverting my meaning. Whatever the enormity be, you are certainly guilty of it.

However, you have not done with this subject, on which you fancy you have so much the advantage of me, and, poor as is the handle it gives you for cavilling, you are willing to make a little more of it. You say (p. 224) that “granting the notion of the immortality of the soul was imported into christianity from the heathen philosophy, how could it possibly have contributed to deprave that religious system? If the revealed tenet itself of immortality does not necessarily tend to corrupt the heart, or the christian institution, can it by any means happen, that

“ that the same belief, when supposed to
 “ spring from a second source, should pro-
 “ duce such pernicious effects ? I blush,
 “ Sir, to suppose you capable of such flimsy
 “ reasoning. But the fact stands recorded
 “ against you, and your philosophy must
 “ bear you through as well as it may. It
 “ may perhaps be glorious to dissent from
 “ the crowd ; but it is not, I am sure, rati-
 “ onal, when more plausible reasons for
 “ such conduct cannot be adduced.”

Here, again, notwithstanding your insult-
 ing me in this manner, you appear to know
 so very little of the argument you have un-
 dertaken to discuss, as to take it for
 granted, that there can be no foundation
 for the belief of any future life, but upon
 that of the *natural immortality of the human*
soul, as if you had never heard of the
 scripture doctrine of *the resurrection of the*
dead.

I shall now recite the whole of the pa-
 ragraph on which your most uncharitable
 censure of me above mentioned is founded,
 with another set of your remarks upon it,

no less extraordinary than those quoted above.

“ The opinion of the natural immortality of the soul had its origin in the heathen philosophy; and having, with other pagan notions, insinuated itself into christianity, which has been miserably depraved by this means, has been the great support of the popish doctrines of *purgatory*, and the *worship of the dead*.”

This paragraph I maintain to be, in its utmost extent, *strictly true*, and I have little doubt but that the truth of it will be sufficiently evident from what I have advanced in the *Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit*, and especially in the *Sequel* to them. But supposing it had not been strictly true, it is not surely so *palpably untrue*, as that the misrepresentation must necessarily be wilful. You say, however, on this occasion, “ That a writer who plumes himself on the character of singular candour and sincerity, could have written a paragraph so replete with falsehood and wilful misrepresentation, is not, at least, a
“ common

“ common phenomenon in the history of
“ the human mind.”

To the latter part of the paragraph, viz. that “ the notion of the natural immortality of the soul has been the great support of the popish doctrines of *purgatory*, and the *worship of the dead*,” you say, (p. 225) “ Therefore, most certainly, it “ came from the devil, or what is worse, “ was invented by one of the antichrists of “ papal Rome.

“ By purgatory (for I also understand “ something of the popish scheme of faith) “ is meant a place of expiatory punishment. It is grounded on the belief of “ the soul’s immortality, joined to a notion “ that nothing undefiled can enter into “ heaven. But why should you fancy “ that this doctrine rests *solely* on the opinion of natural immortality, when a “ more adequate basis may be discovered, “ to wit, an express revelation, which “ both you and the papists (what a monstrous coalition !) maintain, is ludicrous “ enough? Besides, what possible support

“ can that Romish tenet derive from the
“ pagan sentiment in question? Just with
“ equal propriety might you assert that
“ the doctrines of hell and heaven (only
“ that they are not exclusively popish)
“ are sprung from, or at least founded on,
“ the same opinion.

“ En passant, Doctor, give me leave to
“ ask what objection can you consistently
“ have to the doctrine of *purgatory*, you
“ who, I suppose with Dr. Hartley and
“ others, have adopted the notion of an
“ universal restoration, to take place some
“ time or other? That notion annihilates
“ the belief of eternal punishment, and
“ consequently establishes a purgatory upon
“ a more extensive and extraordinary
“ plan, indeed, than is that of Rome; but
“ still a purgatory it most certainly is.
“ And if you will insist that the popish te-
“ net rests on the sentiment of natural
“ immortality, by what finesse of logic
“ will you be able to prove that your own
“ purgatory is not derived, or upheld, by
“ the same opinion.

“ What

“ What you would mean to say by the
 “ worship of the dead, another popish doc-
 “ trine you assert supported by the same
 “ opinion, is, to me, quite a mystery. I have
 “ been a good deal connected with Roman
 “ Catholics, both at home and abroad, but
 “ I never understood that worshipping the
 “ dead was a part of their religion.

“ What opinion, think you, will your
 “ foreign friends Father Beccaria, and
 “ others, form of your candour and sim-
 “ plicity of heart, when they shall read
 “ this curious note? But I beg your par-
 “ don, Sir. Your friends on the other side
 “ of the water are, I suppose, mostly of
 “ the infidel cast. You would not, I dare
 “ say, be connected with *bigots* of any
 “ nation. Seriously, to meet with such
 “ stale and childish reflexions, in a work,
 “ as you tell us, addressed to *philosophers*,
 “ gives me a very poor opinion of your
 “ ingenuousness, and liberal turn of mind.
 “ And with what face can you continue to
 “ brand others with the odious appellati-
 “ on of *bigots*, and of enemies to free en-
 “ quiry, whilst you still retain rankling

“ within your own breast those same ridiculous prejudices against the Roman, and perhaps other churches, which you first imbibed within the walls of your nursery ?”

On these extraordinary paragraphs of yours I shall make a few remarks.

1. I have no where said that the doctrine of purgatory rests *solely* on that of the natural immortality of the soul, but only that the latter is the *great support* of the former.

2. You say that, with equal propriety, I might say that the doctrine of *heaven* and *hell* is founded on the same opinion; forgetting that there is no *unembodied spirit* in my heaven or hell.

3. My own *purgatory*, as you are pleased to call it (and to which I have no objection) being the temporary punishment of the wicked, also affects the *body* which rises from the tomb, and not the *separate soul*; so that it cannot require much *finesse* of

of logic, to prove that it does not rest on the same foundation with the popish doctrine of purgatory.

4. I call the popish custom of praying to St. Peter, St. Paul, &c. a *worshipping of the dead*, because these saints are *in a state of death*, as the papists themselves will not deny; for if they be not dead, they *never did die at all*, there not having been; that we know of, any resurrection of the dead since their decease. Besides it would justify me if I saw them worshipping persons whom *I believed* to be dead.

5. As the paragraph quoted above could hardly be written by any other than a papist, I will take this opportunity of informing you and others, that, if by my *friends*, you mean persons connected with me by common pursuits and correspondence, I have among them both infidels and bigots; but that I never trouble myself about any man's faith or pursuits in some respects, if he be a man to my liking in others. Nor do I know that any of my friends in one respect complain of me for troubling

them with my creed, or my schemes, in others. At the same time my friendships, in some respects, have not biased my judgment in others. With an unbelieving philosopher, I am philosopher, but not the less a christian, if any circumstances should bring the subject of religion in view; though it is a thing that, zealous as I am in that respect, I never obtrude upon any man. And though you treat me as a *bigot*, I do not, like those of your persuasion, confine the favour of God, here or hereafter, to my own sect, or even to the class of christians; and I consider the immoral christian, of every persuasion, and especially of my own, as the most criminal of mankind. Many of my philosophical acquaintance treat with a good nature ridicule my profession of christianity, and I am ready either to argue the case with them seriously, or to smile, in my turn, at their ridiculing me; knowing that, in general, it is not accompanied with that attention to the subject, and consequently with that knowledge of it, which I, at least, *pretend* to.

I am

I am even not without friends among zealous catholics, little as you seem to suspect it, and I know how to value individuals, of that or any communion, at the same time that I seriously consider the Pope as *the man of sin*, and the *antichrist*, foretold in the scripture; and the popish religion, as distinguished from Protestantism, as a mass of the most horrid corruptions of christianity. And if you will wait for the last part of my *Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion*, you will see that charge, narrow and bigotted as you will think me, proved in its utmost extent; though I do not say that my reasons will be such as will make any change in your religious creed. The force of prejudice, imbibed as you say *in the nursery*, even in virtuous and ingenuous minds, is often greater than that of any argument.

The article of religion, however, excepted, I really flatter myself, that I shall be able to make some impression upon you; and the remarks and observations advanced in this letter I propose by way of an *experiment* of the kind; though I own I am
some-

sometimes ready to despair of my undertaking, when I consider how very fully you seem to be *persuaded in your own mind*. The language in which you have, upon some occasions, expressed this fulness of persuasion is so peculiarly strong, that I cannot help smiling when I consider on how very weak a foundation this confidence stands, and how very soon, I am willing to hope, it will fall to the ground.

You say (p. 4) “with respect to
“the present debate I am bold to declare
“that if I am not on the right side, I will
“never sacrifice one single moment of my
“future life to the discovery of truth.”

Concerning one argument to prove, against Dr. Hartley, that the mechanical system cannot pre-suppose free-will, in the popular and practical sense, you say (p. 184) “If this reasoning be not decisive
“against Dr. Hartley, I am willing to give
“up all pretensions to the least atom of
“common sense, and fairly submit to be
“classed in the same rank of being with
“the pen I write with.”

This

LETTERS ON MATERIALISM. 203

This language, I would observe by the way, very much resembles that of Mr. Venn, in the first controversy in which I was ever engaged. He said he would *burn his Bible* if his conclusions from it were not just. But, as I admonished him, that his resolution was a very rash one, as he had much to learn from his Bible yet, so though you should be convinced that you have hitherto been engaged in a fruitless pursuit of truth, I would not have you, out of despair, give up the search. If you be not too old, you may recover the time you have lost on the false scent, and by double diligence come up with the foremost, after you have got into the right track.

At present, however, which is curious enough, you express the same persuasion concerning me that I do concerning you. For you say (p. 82) “ I dare defy the most
“ virulent and subtle adversary to produce
“ one single absurdity, through the whole
“ system of *immaterialism*, which, with his
“ hand on his breast, the Rev. Dr. Priestley
“ will declare to be such.”

Now,

Now, in my *Disquisitions*, I have shewn, as you will see, that the system of immaterialism is *replete with absurdity*, and I do assure you that I can very safely lay my hand on my breast, and declare that I really believe the whole charge to be well founded. In return, I challenge you to prove a single absurdity in the system of *materialism*. I have distinctly replied to all the objections you have advanced against it, whether they be peculiar to yourself, or not. Do you shew the futility of these replies, if you can.

I shall now close this letter, after informing you, that, though my animadversions on your letters do not make more than about ten distinct articles, I could easily have extended them to three or four times that number. For the things I have dwelt upon afford but a sample of the manner in which the whole book is written, with respect both to strength of argument, and manner of writing.

I must not, however, quite shut up this letter till I have informed you, how very rash

you have been to conclude that, because I did not publicly disown a particular Essay published in the *London Review*, you are authorized, as you say, (p. 7) to deem it mine, or, which *nearly amounts to the same*, that it came forth under my *tutelage*, and *kind protection*. You repeat the same on several other occasions, as (p. 40) and elsewhere. Now I do not yet know any thing more of the author of that piece than I suppose you do. Even the sentiments of it are, in many respects, not mine, as you may find by my *Disquisitions*; nor do I consider the writer of it as very much my friend. Be this as it will, you certainly had no right to consider any thing as being *mine*, that does not *bear my name*. Besides, can I be supposed either to read every anonymous publication, especially in *periodical works*, of which this country affords so great a number, or know what things are ascribed to me? I assure you I never heard of this in particular being by any body supposed to be mine, till I saw the charge in your printed letters.

Let

Let this one *unquestionably false charge* teach you more caution for the future, and let it likewise impress your mind with the idea of its being possible for you to have been as much mistaken in other particulars as you have been in this.

I might have enlarged on your accounts of the advertisement signed *J. Seton*, and of the defence I was compelled to make of myself in the pamphlet intitled *Philosophical Empiricism*, both of which are gross misrepresentations of the facts, and to appearance malevolent; but I am really weary of animadverting upon such things. I leave them to the judgment of the Public, and wishing you both more discernment, and more candour.

I am, Sir,



your very humble servant,

CALNE,
July, 1777.

J. PRIESTLEY,

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